



the UNIGRAM

Emerging Faith: A Unitarian Universalist Journey

Rev. Seth Carrier-Ladd, Minister

Emergence: A child grows up in a secular humanist Unitarian Universalist church. Reason and science are emphasized, his parents are atheists, and he naturally adopts an atheist belief system.

Emergence: During his Coming of Age year, this child, now a teenager, decides that he's agnostic. "When I see the beauty of sunsets, or mountain views, it makes me wonder. How did this all come to be? I don't think there's such a thing as God, but I'm not sure there isn't either. I just don't know."

Emergence: In college, this teenager, entering into early young adulthood, discovers the sacred text of Taoism, the Tao Te Ching, and is captivated. "The Tao that is the Tao is not the Tao," reads one of the many English translations of the first line of this sacred text. The young adult's sense of trying to understand the unknowable deepens from this initial, and continued encounter.

Emergence: In his late twenties, this young adult gently and tentatively begins to identify as a theist. He avoids using the

[\(continued on page 10\)](#)



In This Issue

<u>Sunday Mornings</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>Theme Exploration</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>Religious Education News</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Intern Minister</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>Splinters from the Board</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>Funding Our Future</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>2018-19 Stewardship Campaign</u>	
<u>Sharing Gratitude</u>	<u>12</u>
<u>April Calendar</u>	<u>13</u>



Must Something Break?

Rev. Julia Corbett-Hemeyer, Community Minister

I've been thinking a lot lately about things breaking, which isn't surprising since I took a tumble and broke myself a few weeks ago. I sustained what is really a minor, although very painful, fracture. My self-image, however, was shattered.

Then I read the lead story in the Muncie *StarPress* on Sunday, March 11, which led me to more pondering on the relationship between things breaking and our April theme of Emergence. The article featured Jim Wright and his family of Yorktown. If you missed the original reporting, he and his family were driving in their car when a tree blew over on the car, and all four were injured. Mr. Wright's injuries left him paralyzed from the

chest down. A lot of this follow-up article focused on his reflection on the meaning of what happened to him, and the emergence of a more outspoken and robust Christian faith as a result.

I'll be frank: I have theological problems with the line of reasoning he takes. As a result of the scans done after the accident, doctors discovered blood clots and a cancerous tumor that otherwise would have gone undetected and would probably have been fatal eventually. Mr. Wright believes God allowed the accident to happen because God has a plan, a mission for Mr. Wright. That is vastly different than saying that God *caused* the accident to happen. His sense of this mission and God's plan emerged as a result of the terrible breakage of his life endured in the accident.

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

Sunday Mornings at Our Church in the Woods

Services at 9:15 & 11:15 am

April Theme :: Emergence

Our April theme of Emergence invites us to consider what happens when we slow down enough to let things grow and evolve naturally. We tend to want to be in control, to direct, to choose... there are times though, where we might be better served by allowing ourselves or our lives to be like seeds, and slowly emerge from the fertile soils of our experience. We'll explore all this and more on Sunday mornings this month.

There will be no services on Easter Sunday, April 1st to give people more time to spend with their families and loved ones... just kidding, early April Fools! We'll celebrate Easter Sunday on April 1st, as usual, with balloons, special music, and a multi-generational service welcoming to children of all ages. April 15th is Membership Sunday, where we will honor long-term members as part of what used to be Heritage Sunday, as well as those new members who have joined in the past year.

April 1, 8, 15, 22 – Rev. Seth Carrier-Ladd

April 29 – Joel Tishken, Intern Minister

Religious Education for Children & Youth

Classes at 9:15 & 11:15 am

On Sunday, April 1, we will be holding a Multigenerational Service at both the 9:15 and 11:15 Services, where children and youth join their families for the entire youth-friendly worship service together. Childcare is available in the Blue room for preschool and kindergarten children, as needed. An Easter Egg Hunt will be held following the second service.

During the 9:15 service on all following Sundays, Nadine will be leading a multiage theme-based class.

Our 11:15 Religious Education Classes in grades Preschool-5th grade will be focusing on the theme of the month "Emergence" through story, song, and hands-on-activities.

Our 11:15 Coming of Age Class will continue to explore their faith beliefs and begin writing their Faith Statements.

Our 11:15 high school class will be meeting with **Pam Harwood** on April 8 and April 22 to continue their exploration of their UU faith and values through discussions on the theme of the month and will continue working on their murals representing our UU principles. On April 15 and April 29 they will be meeting with **Maggie Bartlett**, exploring their UU faith and values through the curriculum *Popcorn Theology*.

Adult Religious Exploration Offerings

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 on Sunday mornings.

Every Sunday, 9:30 am
Red Room

Adult Discussion Group

This group is a chance for people with various personal beliefs to get together and openly discuss a variety of topics. You'll find weekly topics on [page 12](#).

Every Sunday, 10:15 am
Violet room

Muncie UU Pagans

This is an open discussion group to explore the differences in our pagan traditions. People of any belief are welcome.

Theme Exploration – Emergence

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 this month is a poem titled “Last Night” by Antonio Machado:

Last night as I was sleeping I dreamt a marvelous illusion that there was a spring breaking out in my heart.
I said, "Along what secret aqueduct are you coming to me
Oh water, water of a new life that I have never drunk."

Last night as I was sleeping I dreamt a marvelous illusion that there was a beehive here in my heart.
And the golden bees were making white combs
and sweet honey from my old failures.

Last night as I was sleeping I dreamt a marvelous illusion that there was a fiery sun here in my heart.
It was fiery because it gave warmth as if from a hearth
And it was sun because it gave light and brought tears to my eyes.

Last night as I was sleeping I dreamt a marvelous illusion that there was God here in my heart.

Questions for Reflection

Is it possible that emergence from pain requires you figuring out its gift? Is it possible that instead of asking, “How do I escape?” you need to first ask “What is Life trying to get me to see?”

Instead of feeling punished or wronged, what if you choose to see your current mess as Life telling you, “It’s time to reboot!”

What if we become beautiful only by helping others find their beauty? What if we become free only by helping others find their freedom?

Who is behind your mask, longing to come out and be seen?

What if Life isn’t trying to get us to transform into something new or better? What if it simply wants us to emerge into the awareness that we are already enough?

Resources for Going Deeper

Article – “7 Signs You’re Experiencing a Major Spiritual Transformation (*and emerging into something new*)” by Natasha Che
<https://goo.gl/NCVDs4>

Book – Homo Deus by Yuval Noah Harari
Review: “On humanity’s future, and our emerging quest to upgrade humans into gods... As the self-made gods of planet earth, what destinies will we set ourselves, and which quests will we undertake? Homo Deus explores the projects, dreams and nightmares that will shape the twenty-first century—from overcoming death to creating artificial life. It asks the fundamental questions: Where do we go from here? And how will we protect this fragile world from our own destructive powers?”

Spiritual or Reflective Practice

Find a sacred text, or a book of poems, or any collection of spiritually inspiring material that speaks to you, and spend a week with it. Each day, intentionally engage with the material, and reflect on the following: How is life calling you to emerge into deeper or greater living? What form of new being and becoming are you being invited to lean into? Allow your spiritually inspiring material of choice to be a partner in helping you answer those questions.

2017-18 Themes

September – Welcome	February – Perseverance
October – Story	March – Balance
November – Abundance	April – Emergence
December – Hope	May – Risk
January – Intention	June – Blessing

Religious Education Corner

Nadine Tringali
Director of Religious Education

Multigenerational Service and Easter Egg Hunt Easter Sunday, April 1

This morning we will not be holding religious education classes, as we welcome all ages to remain in the sanctuary. Childcare will be available for preschool and kindergarten children, as needed, during the two services. There will be an **Easter Egg Hunt** for children & youth following the second service. Please gather in the fellowship hall for guidelines on how many eggs to search for and to pick up an Easter sack to collect eggs. Our nursery and preschool Easter Egg Hunt will be in the playground. The Easter Egg Hunt for the older youth will be on the front grounds.

Boston Bound Bake Sale & Soup Luncheon Fundraiser Sunday, April 15

Our Boston Bound youth will be holding a bake sale and soup luncheon on Sunday, April 15. We will be selling delicious baked goods following the first and second service. Our soup luncheon will be held following the second service. This is a great opportunity to meet and support our youth!

RE Teacher Appreciation Luncheon – Sunday, April 22

We invite all our RE teachers, assistants, and COA mentors and their families to please join us for our "Appreciation Luncheon" following the second service in the fellowship hall. We want to take this time to do something special for you and your family as our way of thanking you for your love and support to the children & youth of our church. Please accept our thanks by taking a Sunday off from cooking lunch for your family and spending it with us. To help us prepare, please RSVP to the SignUpGenius form that I will be emailing to everyone.

Coming of Age

This month our COA youth have the opportunity to participate in a Wilderness Journey at Mounds State Park the weekend of April 27-29. The essence of a wilderness journey is time alone in nature. Solo time in the wilderness has been an important part of many cultures. Spending time alone outdoors is a powerful thing, especially in our plugged-in, turned-on, full-tilt society. It gives you time to think, time to dream, and time to simply experience the world. It is a wonderful opportunity to meditate, a chance to look at your life goals, and it is a test of how comfortable you are with yourself. Their mentors will join them on April 28 for lunch and a special celebration.

Nadine

Youth News

Rev. Elizabeth Carrier-Ladd
Coordinator of Youth Programs

Brunch Fundraiser

Our April Fundraiser Brunch will be on April 8! Plan to stay after the first service or come early to the second service for a tasty brunch for a good cause! Food is served at 10:15 am. If you'd like to help make food, please check the eBlast for the sign up!

Youth Group Schedule

Youth Group is 12:45-2:15 pm. Lunch is served.
April 8 – MS Youth Group
April 22 – Combined Youth Group
April 29 – HS Youth Group

Special Youth Events in April

April 20 - Service Journey Gathering for Youth Attending

April 27-29 – Wilderness Journey for Coming of Age Youth

Elizabeth



The Religious Education Program for Children & Youth is always appreciative of donations of apple juice and cheese crackers for our Sunday morning snack and packaged cookies, crackers, chips, and pretzels for our Middle School and High School Youth Group meetings.

Like a Phoenix

Joel Tishken, Intern Minister

The phoenix of Greek and Roman mythology is a long-living bird that is born from the remains of its predecessor. Accounts of how long it lived, what size it was, its coloration, and the like, are all varied. That variation includes the way in which the phoenix was reborn. According to some accounts the phoenix decomposed before being born again. In other accounts, the phoenix dies amid combustion and flames and rises from the ashes.



Regardless of which account we are to give greatest credence to, the phoenix remains an enduring symbol of renewal and emergence in Western culture. The phoenix appears widely in literature, art, music, film, and television. While a mythical creature, the life of the phoenix can serve as a useful metaphor for us. Its emergence, or re-emergence, into the world comes as a result of the death of its predecessor. New life emerges from the passing of the old, and the new cannot arrive until the death of the old.

There is surely nothing wrong with us pursuing growth and emergence from nothing. Trying something new, bringing out a new behavior, or creating a new way of thinking about something are often great moments of transformation for our lives and something we should often strive for. But what if there are times when something new is unable to emerge? What if something old is holding up the arrival of something new? For example, if we're holding onto an old pain, perhaps playing memories over and over again, it could very well leave us "stuck" in that place, unable to move onward to new things.

I recall a romantic breakup of some years ago that left me stuck in the old. While it was not the first time I had a relationship end, this one was particularly difficult as it had left me feeling surprised and betrayed. I started dating again soon after, with the narrative in my head that the best way to get over bad romance was some good romance. While sounding good, and perhaps sometimes the right course, in this case it was not. I needed to sit with and process my hurt, and let go of the old situation, before I was ready for one that was new.

My letting go of the old some time later, and emerging as someone new, prepared for new romance – I suspect this was much less triumphant and magnificent than a phoenix rising from the ashes. But my emergence from the old and into the new was no less important in my romantic life at the time. Experiences like that, though painful, offer opportunity for growth, renewal, and reemergence. But sometimes we have to let go of the old for the cycle to begin.

Joel

Program Fair :: Sunday, April 8

Do you have gifts and passions you'd like to contribute to UUCM? We have many committees, task forces, special projects, and groups who would love to have you and your gifts and passions! UUCM is having a Program Fair to inform members and friends, new and old, of all the opportunities to connect and serve at UUCM. The Program Fair will have representatives of our programs on-hand to answer all your questions.

Please join us for the Program Fair after second service on April 8th. If you have any questions, contact with **Holly Hanauer, John Bartlett, or Intern Minister Joel.**



Splinters from the Board - Looking to the Future

Exploring faith. Practicing Inclusivity. Living Justice.

As I write, we have just completed our two Listening Sessions, and the members of the Board and the Committee on Ministries are collating the results and formulating responses. The sessions themselves went smoothly. The biggest problem was a good problem: so many people wanted to participate that it got a little unwieldy. Thanks to the many who participated.

Of course, we spent most of the time in the sessions on our concerns. Combined with the number of participants, that means that the Board and COM will need to take special care in crafting their report, so please be patient.

In light of all the concerns expressed, it is especially nice to be able to report on the many good things that our happening around UUCM. One of the best is that the Board has appointed **Mary Johnson Robey** to serve as President-Elect. Mary is a long-time member and active volunteer who has served as Board Secretary and is very familiar with the functioning of the board. Her willingness to serve should make for a smooth transition in July.

The Stewardship Committee is winding up their work, and things are looking good. Thanks to Chairperson **Nan Barber, Katie Frederick, and Linda McKean** for all their hard work. This year we have worked to assure that the Stewardship Committee, the Finance Committee (**Lynn Sousa**, Chair) and the board are doing a good job of communicating and coordinating. Much of the burden for this work has fallen on Treasurer **Jennifer Hollems**, and she has come through.

Thanks to the initiative shown by **Matt Cechini** and the many volunteers who helped, we were also able to cover nearly two weeks of meals at the Christian Ministries Sleeping Room. As you know, the March lion never left, and the homeless men who use the sleeping room needed food and shelter badly. I know that we rightly concern ourselves with all the troubles

and turmoils of the world, but the simple act of preparing and serving a hot meal to persons in need is just as important as ever, and just as much at the heart of service.

Speaking of troubles and turmoil, since I am writing on March 21st, I don't know how the anti-violence "March for Our Lives" in Indianapolis went, but I do know that many UUCM youths and adults were planning to participate. The weather forecast is daunting, but the willingness of so many to rally for sensible measures to prevent gun violence is heartening. Our youth, **Laura Janney, Jan and Ron Moore**, and all the participants deserve our thanks.

Our youth are also busy participating in the Our Whole Lives sex education classes, the Coming of Age process, and preparations for the summer service journey to the Arizona borderlands to learn and serve those who are coming to the United States from Mexico. This trip involves several sessions of training and education to prepare the youths for the trip (and to help them bond as a group). Many of you have supported the youth by attending the brunches and lunches. There are more opportunities to help as we continue fundraising for the service journey and add soup lunches for Boston Bound, a trip our middle school youth will take to Boston to learn about our UU heritage.

We can also celebrate the inauguration of the small group "Connections" program, with more Connection Group opportunities to come. One of the advantages of our transition to a program church is that we can actually increase the number of interactions among members in small group settings, allowing us to offer each other more support, knowledge, and spiritual growth.

Then there's the usual—the stuff we do so much that we forget how exceptional it is. For example, the religious education of our youth, the weekly sessions of the Discussion Group and the Pagans, the underappreciated efforts of our Property

(continued on page 11)

Funding Our Future

When courage, genius, and generosity hold hands, all things are possible. ~Unknown

Our UUCM community *answers the call* when asked. Whether it was social justice at Muncie Soup Kitchen, Friends Pantry, UUCM Food Pantry or Second Harvest, WE ANSWER the CALL! Whether it is Bazaar in the Woods, Boston Bound for the kids, Service Auction, hospitality at the services, or helping property maintenance, WE ANSWER the CALL! All those calls and more were answered in 2017.

Then that pesky Stewardship Pledge Drive came to a tired congregation. We carried out a different approach, to save money on postage and paper, by holding Funding Our Future for three Sundays.

It worked pretty darn well!

There are 101 pledge units that have answered our call to date. We asked each of you to consider a minimum increase of 5%. New members willingly pledged. You answered the call!

However, the \$300,000 goal was not reached.

Our Stewardship Campaign has reached \$253,822 – 85% of our \$300,000 goal.

We are grateful and proud of the UUCM congregation who decided the health of our church community is important to continue supporting financially, as well as with time and talents.

Thank you for answering the call!

Thank you for the privilege of serving you in this essential mission of Funding Our Future. Thank you for making your pledge shine!

For those who have yet to pledge... pledges are always accepted.

Please answer the call! Pledge today with our [online form](#).

Stewardship Committee

Nan Barber

njbarb1@gmail.com

Linda McKean

lwmckean@comcast.net

Katie Frederick

katie@kbfrederick.com

New Adult Religious Exploration Opportunities

UUCM will feature two Adult religious exploration opportunities this spring, facilitated by **Intern Minister Joel**.

Shared Pulpit is a workshop that helps lay people gain experience designing, writing, and preaching a full-length sermon. Some loan copies of the workshop book titled [The Shared Pulpit](#), are available; talk with Intern Minister Joel about them. Participants are also welcome to purchase their own book – you can find them online [here](#). Shared Pulpit will meet Sundays 12:45-2:00 pm, in the Red Room, from April 15 - June 3 (except May 20 & May 27).

Credo-Writing for Adults explores weekly theological topics that build toward the writing of a personal theological statement, or credo. This course will meet Mondays from April 23 - June 4 (except May 28), 6:30-7:30 pm, in the Indigo Room.



“Unitarianism” Harshman Panel
Photo by Gunther Cartwright

A Balance of Knowing and Not Knowing

One pleasure for me each month is gathering with my small Connection Group. Eight of us meet to share our experience with materials developed by Soul Matters, a UUA cooperative of over 200 congregations. These materials encourage reflection and suggest spiritual exercises on the same themes we investigate each month during worship.

In March's Connection Group packet on balance, the following caught my eye:

"Spiritual knowing must be balanced by not knowing."

So I started pondering what I know and don't know. In our free religious community each of us has our own list and most will differ from mine.

So, as a religious humanist, what do I know?

I know that we are each here because of remarkable and unlikely events over millions and billions of years. I know that we are here because of an enormous cosmic event three billion years ago, an event that scientists continue to work to understand more completely.

I know that mammals, including humans, thrive on earth today because a gigantic meteor struck the Yucatan Peninsula 65 million years ago, creating climate change that brought to an end the 150 million year reign of dinosaurs as kings of the world – talk about a loss of balance! Their demise left room for the evolution of new creatures.

I know there is much in our lives over which we have no control: our DNA, our brain chemistry, who our parents are, and in the words of my good friend, Mike Sullivan, the powerful geography of our birth. Some of us are blessed with more years of good health, more comfortable lives lived out in relative peace. Many aren't. I know that life is unfair.

Yet I know the beauty of the full moon reflecting on a shimmering lake, the bronze-rust sunset at the

horizon, the trust in a baby's first smile, the conscious-raising beauty of music, the final rays of sunlight reflecting on a squirrel's tawny-tummy as he eats one last nut. I know that just being alive is a blessing, and I am everlastingly grateful to that one sperm out of millions who won the race.

What don't I know?

I don't know what happens to us when we die. I believe this is all there is and that we live on in the memories of those who love us and tell stories about us. But I don't know that.

I don't know there is no god; the non-existence of god has never been proved. I don't believe there is a god, but I don't know that.

I don't know why we are here...or as my thoughtful husband, Lynn, pointed out, if there even is a why.

I have become comfortable with all I don't know. But I understand the primordial need to know and why religious beliefs, structures, and names for a supernatural being have existed as long as humans have been on earth.

Spiritual knowing – informed by science, reason, and life experience – must be balanced by non-knowing. That means accepting there is much we will never know. Some wise people call this the Ultimate Mystery.

Living and loving and supporting each other within that balance of what we know and can never know allows us, as one writer put it, "to remain open to new learnings and awareness."

~ Bea Sousa

*If you're interested in joining a Connection Group, contact our Intern Minister, **Joel Tishken**, at joel@uuchurchmuncie.org. New Connection Groups will be forming soon!*

Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy. You vote in elections once a year, but when you volunteer, you vote every day about the kind of community you want to live in. ~Author Unknown

Help Needed for Second Harvest Forward S.T.E.P.S. Dinner on April 19th

Our church, under the auspices of the Feed Our Hungry Neighbors (FOHN) Task Force, annually supplies, serves, and cleans up after a late August dinner for participants in the Forward S.T.E.P.S. Program. Until recently, this was the anti-poverty Circles initiative through Teamwork for Quality Living, and then, after a merger, through Second Harvest. "Forward S.T.E.P.S." is the new name.

Once each month, participants in Forward S.T.E.P.S. – folks dealing with poverty, their volunteer allies, and staffers from Second Harvest – meet for a dinner and brief program to support the vital, difficult, and complex work of helping people increase their economic self-sufficiency.

Because we've learned that the program needs more volunteer help, we're now sponsoring an additional dinner next month: on **Thursday evening, April 19**. Check your email for a SignUp Genius invitation soliciting donations of time (for set-up, serving, and clean up), lasagna, fruit crisps, bread, and grapes. If you'd like to help but prefer not to use Sign-Up Genius, you may also contact **Steve Chalk** directly (srchalk66@gmail.com). The dinner takes place at First Baptist Church in downtown Muncie. All volunteers are welcome and encouraged to stay for the dinner as well!

Thank you so much for considering this important volunteer activity. Members and friends of UUCM have been wonderful about contributing to many important projects combating poverty and food insecurity—and this is among them.

How Can UUCM Help Christian Ministries Sleeping Room?

For more than 20 years UUCM members and friends have provided breakfast and dinner to the men of the Christian Ministries Sleeping Room during Thanksgiving and Christmas weeks. **Linda Gregory** initially brought the need to the congregation's attention and with her sister, **Connie**, single handedly managed this project for many years. It became a project of the Feeding Our Hungry Neighbors (FOHN) Task Force about 10 years ago. We understood that these holiday weeks were the hardest to fill and that other churches in our community volunteered the rest of the year. When new UUCM friend **Matt Cechini** and member **Emily Wornell** learned in December that Director Betty Robinson of the Sleeping Room was doing much of the daily food preparation, FOHN decided to find volunteers for two additional weeks.

See the list in the Gratitude section for the 19 UUCM households who helped with 18 breakfasts and dinners between March 11 and 24....64% of the meal slots in those two weeks. And we are excited to have at least two new volunteers. Betty tells us that being able to demonstrate expanding support with new volunteers is critical to receiving grants.

This week we learned that only 10 churches in Muncie are volunteering at the Sleeping Room... nine others besides UUCM. We are surprised and saddened by this news. In the coming months FOHN will be thinking of ways we can help address this situation. Betty was pleased to tell us that the shelter will be open two additional months this year, May and June, due to a \$10,000 grant; it costs \$5000 a month to run the shelter. Good news to be sure, but 122 additional meals to prepare and serve.

Emerging Faith: A Unitarian Universalist Journey

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

word god, since it usually means something different to other people than it does to him. He has taken the concept of the Tao, and adapted it to fit his own understandings and experiences. Like his Universalist forbearers, he believes Love is the true essence of the unnamable, unknowable mystery that is the universe.

Emergence: Age thirty, our journeyer has what he can only describe as a mystical experience. Traveling on a ferry off the coast of Maine, he is overcome by an incredible sense of connection to the vastness of the ocean, and to all that is. He is unaware, until brushed by a passerby, that he has lifted up his arms overhead, open, in the universal posture of receiving. Joy, pure joy, goodness, love, fullness... there is no self, there is just connection, and expansiveness.

* * * * *

These are snapshots of my own personal spiritual and theological journey, of course, and represent my own experience. A different Unitarian Universalist minister completing a similar exercise might share the opposite theological shift, from theism into atheism. Yet a different minister might have been atheist their whole life, and highlight their journey into embracing Buddhism. Our intern minister, Joel, might explore his experiences with Paganism. I share my snapshots now though to lift up a characteristic of Unitarian Universalism that often remains undiscussed – we are constantly in process. Our understanding and beliefs about the world evolve over the course of our lifetimes. They emerge out of the interaction of our family context, our own experiences, our learnings of the realities of science and reason, the wisdom of wise men and women who have come before us, and so much more. But emerge, over time, they do indeed.

I note that we often don't talk about this, because I think there is a tendency sometimes in Unitarian Universalism to think that creating our framework of faith, or how we make meaning of the world, is a one time deal. In the Coming of Age program that our youth are currently going through, they are asked to write faith statements, which share their current understanding of how they make meaning of existence. Seemingly in parallel, one of the more popular adult

religious education curricula is "Building Your Own Theology." I've never been a fan of that name though, because to me it implies a one-time experience, whereas as I understand the process of shaping my belief system to be an ongoing one.

I shared five snapshots above of different stages of my emerging understanding of how I make meaning of life, the universe and all of existence, and you can see the evolution. Really though, there were hundreds of moments, experiences, conversations with people, engagement with sacred texts, inspiration from the wisdom of sages, profound moments of connection with nature, and more, all of which have slowly shaped and allowed my current understanding to emerge. I don't know for sure of course, but I believe this to be true of most of us, or at the very least, most of us Unitarian Universalists. Our free and responsible search for truth and meaning doesn't end once we've found our first set of answers, or our second, or even fifth or sixth. It is a lifelong journey.

I also really like the idea of these understandings and personal truths emerging. Certainly some are discovered, or stumbled upon, or inspired in us. And, there is something so gentle and profound to me about the idea of a gentle emerging of our own personal truths. Not a forced march, not a tightly controlled experience, but a gentle emerging of what we understand to be true and important in the current moment of our lives. There is comfort for me, in knowing that my understandings are still emerging, that how I believe the world to be in this moment will almost certainly be different, in ways small or large, than my understanding ten years from now. Perhaps that comfort comes from knowing that I don't have to have it all right, right now, in this moment... that it's ok if there's some place, or multiple places, where I'm still missing the mark. Because the important thing is that I'm engaged in the process, I'm still open to allowing new truths to emerge.

There is more, much more, here to explore – I look forward to doing so with you, this coming month, as we examine April's theme of Emergence together. I daresay, I look forward to seeing what new truths emerge. =)

See you in church!

peace, love and blessings,

Rev. Seth

Must Something Break?

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

Here's my problem. Had Mr. Wright been killed in the accident, would it have meant that God did not have a plan for his life? Couldn't an omnipotent and all-loving God have come up with a less drastic way to intervene? A less hurtful way? That all having been said, I'm not questioning the meaningfulness or validity of Mr. Wright's insights for his own life. He's clearly wrenched meaning from an otherwise random tragedy, and I respect that.

His story, along with my own reflections led me to the theme of emergence and things breaking. I don't think something *must* break for emergence to occur, but it seems that often, that's how it happens. Have you ever watched a baby bird peck its way out of its shell? That's no easy process, with the as-yet-completely-new-to-the-world bird battering its way out of the shell from the inside out. Seeds must break in order for the nascent plant inside to emerge. Most animals, ourselves included, give birth amidst blood, pain and (for humans) tears.

As we age, it often becomes necessary to let go of pieces of our self-image or identity that we can no longer sustain. My current reality is no longer compatible with my identity as someone who has always been quite active, independent, and able to do for myself. Frankly, I've sometimes taken that for granted. If I'm to stay safe, I now must accept restrictions on how I live my life.

For our human vulnerability and the authenticity that comes with it to emerge, the shields and armor we have put up to defend ourselves must fall, often a frightening and painful process. For our relationships to get better and more authentic, old ingrained patterns must be broken through so that the new may emerge. In order to embrace diversity, we must break through the "us vs. them" and zero-sum ways of thinking that protect us from genuine engagement with others and the challenges that come with it.

As Unitarian Universalists, we affirm the importance of spiritual growth, of carrying out a free and responsible search for truth and meaning that is genuinely our

own. We do this best when we're part of a community where we experience acceptance, where we feel heard and supported, and where we can hear and support others in their own journeys of emergence. This is what we need to be and seek to be as a church community.

Emergence is exhilarating, exciting, alive with promise. It's also hard as heck, scary, and can leave us feeling bruised and battered. We need each other to support and celebrate this process.

Rev. Julia



"Humanism" Harshman Panel
Photo by Gunther Cartwright

Splinters from the Board

(continued from page 6)

Management Committee, the weekly Body Life Dinner, and so on. So many people in so many ways do the work of the church.

Finally, we look back on a month of wonderful Sunday services featuring Youth Sunday, Music Appreciation Sunday and strong sermons from **Rev. Seth**. The addition of reflections from our Worship Associates as well as participation by our Intern Joel have added diversity and a wealth of insights. We can look forward to more special services, great music, and timely messages.

March was a great month for our church, thanks to you. Imagine what we can do if the weather clears up! Stay tuned for announcements on ways to have even greater participation, greater accountability, and a renewed sense of community.

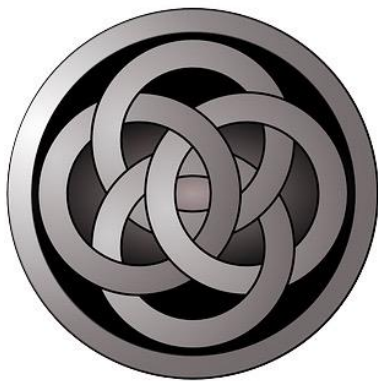
Jerry McKean, President

Sharing Gratitude

Thanks to the following who came forward to provide breakfast or dinner at our second round of volunteering at Christian Ministries Sleeping Room: **Linda Hanson and Gunther Cartwright, Mike and Caroline Sullivan, the Taylor Family, Eleanor Trawick and Markie Oliver, Ron and Jan Moore, Elsbeth Fritz, Jon Nafziger, Yandel Andino, Bruce and Judy Craig, Lynn and Bea Sousa, Alyssa Farnsworth, Linda and Jerry McKean, Melanie and Kent Hanser, Holly Hanauer, Meg Calkins and Jack Elvin, the Reeder and Butterbaugh Families, and Annemarie Voss.** Special thanks to **Matt Cechini** for managing these two extra weeks of service.

~Feeding Our Hungry Neighbors Task Force

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."



Wheel of Life

Ben and I are thrilled that our little girl, **Madison Avery Strack** arrived on 2/26 at 3:48am, weighing 9lb, 2oz, 21.5 inches long. We are all doing well.

~Benjamin Strack and Jennifer Parks-Strack

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.

Adult Discussion Group

Every Sunday :: 9:30 am :: Red room

April 1 - The State of the State and Local Community
Join us as State Representative, **Sue Errington**, leads the morning discussion on the status and implications of current state legislative initiatives.

April 8 - Religious Liberty and the Changing Landscape
Discussion leader will be **Tom Lowe**

April 15 - The Paradox of Our Time
Mike Sullivan will lead a discussion on Steven Pinker's new book, *Enlightenment Now, The Case for Reason, Science, Humanism, and Progress*

April 22 - Not In Whose Backyard?

The facilitator will be **Deboerah Malitz**, a leader of the new "Protect Muncie--Say NO to Exide" movement. Accompanying her will be a couple residents who live near the plant. Come to listen and learn about their story.

April 29 - Emergence

Leslie Duvall will lead a discussion on the monthly theme, *Emergence*.

April 2018 UUCM Calendar

Online calendar: <http://www.uuchurchmuncie.org/members/calendar/>

Regular Weekly Events

Worship Services	Sundays	9:15 & 11:15 am
Religious Exploration for Children & Youth	Sundays	9:15 & 11:15 am
Adult Discussion Group	Sundays	9:30 am
Muncie UU Pagans	Sundays	10:15 am
Inquirers Series (No session April 1)	Sundays	12:45 pm
Adult RE: Shared Pulpit (begins April 15)	Sundays	12:45 pm
Adult RE: Credo-Writing (begins April 23)	Mondays	6:30 pm
Body Life Dinner	Tuesdays	6:00 – 7:30 pm
Finding Spirit :: Transgender Support Group	Tuesdays	7:00 pm
Choir Rehearsal	Tuesdays	7:30 pm
Revival Hour (see online calendar for location)	Wednesdays	5:30 pm
Muncie OUTreach LGBTQ Youth Drop In	Fridays	5:00 – 8:00 pm

April Events & Activities

Visitors Q&A	Sunday	Apr 1	10:30 & 12:45
Social Justice Committee	Monday	Apr 2	7:30 pm
Worship Associates	Wednesday	Apr 4	7:30 pm
Service Journey Fundraiser Brunch	Sunday	Apr 8	10:15 am
Chalice Marketplace	Sunday	Apr 8	10:15 am
Program Fair	Sunday	Apr 8	12:15 pm
Roots & Wings :: New Member Class	Sunday	Apr 8	12:45 pm
Middle School Youth Group	Sunday	Apr 8	12:45 pm
Property Maintenance Committee	Tuesday	Apr 10	6:45 pm
Program Council	Wednesday	Apr 11	7:00 pm
OUTreach Fundraiser	Thursday	Apr 12	6:30 pm
Choir Rehearsal	Sunday	Apr 15	10:30 am
New Member Signing Ceremony	Sunday	Apr 15	10:45 am
Soup Lunch :: Boston Bound Fundraiser	Sunday	Apr 15	12:15 pm
Adult Discussion Committee	Sunday	Apr 15	12:45 pm
Feeding Our Hungry Neighbors Task Force	Tuesday	Apr 17	7:15 pm
Unigram Submission Deadline	Wednesday	Apr 18	9:00 am
Committee on Ministries	Thursday	Apr 19	7:15 pm
RE Teacher Appreciation Lunch	Sunday	Apr 22	12:30 pm
Combined Youth Groups	Sunday	Apr 22	12:45 pm
Board of Trustees	Wednesday	Apr 25	6:30 pm
Membership Committee	Thursday	Apr 26	7:00 pm
CoA Wilderness Journey	Fri-Sun	Apr 27-29	
Congregational Budget Discussion	Sunday	Apr 29	12:30 pm
High School Youth Group	Sunday	Apr 29	12:45 pm

Brunch with Youth!

Our April Fundraiser Brunch will be on April 8th! Plan to stay after the first service or come early to the second service for a tasty brunch for a good cause! Food is served at 10:15 am. If you'd like to help make food, please check the eBlast for the sign up!

Membership Sunday April 15th

On April 15th we will honor those who have been with UUCM for 40 or more years as well as those who have joined within the last year. Please come and join either in the 9:15 service or the 11:15 services – we will recognize our long-term and new members at both. Cookies will be served after 1st and before second service during the coffee hour.

Save The Date: Friday, May 11th!

Jim Scott will return to Muncie to perform a concert! Jim is the composer of many of our beloved hymns, such as “Gather the Spirit” and “May Your Life Be As A Song.” Some of you will remember his Pete Seeger tribute concert her a couple of years ago. You can find more about Jim at his website:

www.JimScottmusic.com.

Mark your calendars now and try to make it to this fun event. More details to follow.

UUCM Staff & Leadership

Rev. Seth Carrier-Ladd, Minister

seth@uuchurchmuncie.org

Rev. Julia Corbett-Hemeyer, Community Minister

julia@uuchurchmuncie.org

Joel Tishken, Intern Minister

joel@uuchurchmuncie.org

Nadine Tringali, Director of Religious Education

nadine@uuchurchmuncie.org

Christie Williams, Office Administrator

christie@uuchurchmuncie.org

Dr. James Helton, Director of Music

jim@uuchurchmuncie.org

Rev. Elizabeth Carrier-Ladd, Coordinator of Youth Programs

elizabeth@uuchurchmuncie.org

Megan Wenning, Membership Coordinator

megan@uuchurchmuncie.org

Board of Trustees

Jerry McKean

President

Mary Johnson Robey

President Elect

John Bartlett

Vice President

Sharon Seager

Secretary

Jennifer Hollems

Treasurer

Holly Hanauer

Past President

Anna Dillinger

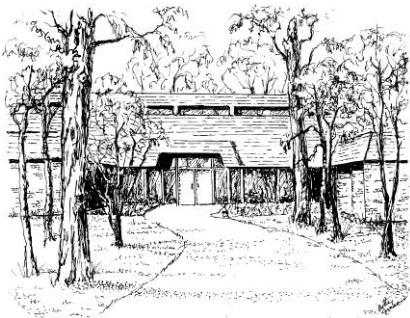
Youth Representative

765.288.9561 | uucm@uuchurchmuncie.org | www.uuchurchmuncie.org

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
Muncie, IN 47304



Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit 635
Muncie, IN

Return Service
Requested

DATED MATERIAL