



the UNIGRAM

Intent vs. Impact

Rev. Seth Carrier-Ladd, Minister

I arrived home a few days ago to find my youngest son, Elias, almost five-months old, sitting in his special baby-seat at the kitchen table. Usually when I first see him after getting home, I get a big smile back, but this time he was, and stayed, very serious. Knowing that I almost always get a laugh if I “beep” his nose (a.k.a. give his nose a gentle squeeze while saying “beep”), I figured I’d try that this time – with disastrous results. Instead of smiling and laughing, he started crying. Now I want to ask you: what do you think I did in response to his crying? Do you think that I either 1) said, “Elias, I was clearly trying to make you laugh, I don’t understand why you’re so upset, I didn’t do anything wrong” and left him sitting there crying, because it wasn’t my fault that he was upset, or

2) I picked him up and patted him on the back to make him feel better?

Clearly the answer is two right? That’s the normal and natural thing to do for a baby. It doesn’t matter that I was trying to make him laugh, that I wasn’t trying to cause him to be upset – it simply matters that my actions had that effect, that impact, and I needed to respond. The thing is, while our instincts are usually option two for babies, for other adults, we too often choose option one. This is particularly true in anti-oppression work for seemingly innocuous statements that actually have a negative impact. A common example in church settings is when a person of color, especially if they’re of

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The Intention of No Intention

Rev. Julia Corbett-Hemeyer, Community Minister

I had trouble getting into this month’s theme. This was in part because I hadn’t allowed myself time to work on it at the leisurely pace I prefer. But, maybe there is more to this. I’m tired of the topic. I’ve written and preached on New Years resolutions in the past. Underneath that, I discovered a yet deeper sense of being tired of the topic in general, not just with what I’d done with it already. And underlying that was the realization that I’m tired of “working on it.”

January seems a logical time to reflect on the year gone by and on the year that is dawning. I’ve always been attracted to the possibility of a fresh start, a

new beginning, a “new and better whatever.” Another chance to remedy past failings and do better next time around. Until now. As one author of a piece in our Soul Matters theme packet for this month notes, maybe 2018 isn’t meant to be the year of “becoming a better me”!

Another author cited the origin of the word intention: “Coming from the Latin word, *intentionem*, intention literally means a stretching out, a stretching out of mind, of heart, of body, of spirit. When we set an intention, we are turning our attention toward something, or someone, or

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Sunday Mornings at Our Church in the Woods

Services at 9:15 & 11:15 am

January Theme :: Intention

Our January theme of Intention invites us to dive deeper into the realm of choice, for intention is all about choosing to do or be something. What intentions have you brought to your life in the past? What intentions do you need to bring moving forward to continue on the path of growth and healing? We'll be exploring all this and more on Sunday mornings this month.

Special Sunday service events include:

- January 7th – The first Sunday with our new service start times, 9:15 am and 11:15 am, with social hour in between starting at 10:15 am
- January 28th – We will hold our annual Age of Reading ceremony, where we formally honor and welcome those young ones among us who are beginning the journey of reading.

January 7 – **Rev. Julia Corbett-Hemeyer** preaches about how she become a Unitarian Universalist

January 14, 21 – **Rev. Seth Carrier-Ladd**

January 28 – **Joel Tishken, Intern Minister**

Religious Education for Children & Youth

Classes at 9:15 & 11:15 am

On the first Sunday, during our 9:15 service, **Joel Tishken** will be leading a multiage Children's Chapel on the theme of the month, Intention, in the Yellow Room. Nadine will be leading a theme-based class during the 9:15 service on the following Sundays.

On the second Sunday, January 14, we will be holding another **high school fundraiser brunch**, from 10:15-11:00 in the fellowship hall. Please come with an appetite for some delicious food!

On Sunday, January 28, we will be celebrating the joy of reading with our annual **K-3rd grade Age of Reading Ceremony**.

During the month of January, our fellowship hall will be decorated with a garland of paper hands that the children and youth have created for the **"Global Art Project – Let's All Join Hands!"**

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. Check out all the offerings below!

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 in the eBlast.

Every Sunday, 10:00 am
Indigo 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 – Intention

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 an excerpt from "Intentions and Trust" by Amy Loyd:

Today I want to greet joy
 Without a trace of suspicion
 I want to open my eyes to the light
 Without a blink of dread
 I want to look at my past
 Without a whisper of shame
 I want to look at my future
 Without a hint of fear
 Today I want to dance
 Without pausing to think
 I want to belly laugh
 Without caring who hears
 I want to open my arms
 and twirl in the sun
 Until I fall breathless
 free to be myself
 full of the joy
 that I open to allow
 completely letting go
 Without even a smudge of suspicion
 or a wink of hesitation
 That's my intention
 It's what I want

Questions for Reflection

1. Are you so dead set on telling your life what you intend to do with it that you no longer notice what it intends to do with you? Could your life's purpose be something that comes from life itself rather than something that is forced on it?
2. What dictates your days? Your To-Do list or your intentionality? Do you begin by asking, "What do I have to get done?" or "What do I want this day to be about?"

3. Do you intentionally allow yourself to make mistakes? New things do not arise without trial and error, missteps and slip-ups. If we're not making mistakes, we're likely choosing safety. Are you intentionally choosing safety over new life?
4. How are you doing at the work of intentional authenticity? Are you succeeding at being the same person on the outside as you are on the inside?

Resources for Going Deeper

Video – Living With Intent - TED Talk

Mallika Chopra

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UTwRlz13NYI>

Book – The Power of Habit by Charles Duhigg

Spiritual or Reflective Practice

For at least one week, carve out some time each morning to complete the sentence: "Today I want to be/feel _____." You can do this while you are meditating, brushing your teeth, eating breakfast or walking the dog. Just make enough room to pick one descriptive word that you want to walk with throughout your day. So many to pick from: generous, powerful, unruffled, trusting, present, nurturing, nurtured, kind. Pull that word into your awareness throughout the day. It helps to literally place it in front of yourself. Write it on a 3x5 card and place it on your desk or put it in your wallet or purse. Maybe even write it on your hand!

Religious Education Corner

Nadine Tringali, Director of Religious Education



K-3rd grade Age of Reading Ceremony

On Sunday, January 28, we wish to celebrate your child's joy of reading! Children in K-3rd grade, who did not participate last year, are invited to walk through a special archway and receive two special books. If your child would like to participate, *please let me know by January 17.*

During the month of January, our fellowship hall will be decorated with a garland of paper hands that the children and youth have created for the **"Global Art Project – Let's All Join Hands!"** If you would like to add your hand to this project, we will have a table set up in the fellowship hall with directions and supplies. In February, we will be sending our paper hands to the "Global Art Project" to be exhibited with thousands of other paper hands as a source of inspiration. A book of paper hands, The Handbook for Peace, is planned for publication.

We had a wonderful group of children and adults attend the **Multigenerational Holiday Ornaments Workshop** on December 17. Creative energies flowed! Not only were ornaments beautifully painted, others were filled with ribbons and glitter, and still others folded origami paper into stunning ornaments! As always, these moments allow us to meet new people, deepen friendships, and enjoy time with our families.

Nadine

Youth Sunday Planning!

*Rev. Elizabeth Carrier-Ladd
Coordinator of Youth Programs*

It is that time of year again. The most exciting and fun part of our youth program. And this year, it is better than ever with a Lock-In to kick off the fun! Below is our schedule for our planning sessions for Youth Sunday this year. All middle and high school aged youth are invited to be a part of the process. Youth do not have to be interested in speaking or performing as part of the service in order to help! Everyone can help to plan!

Saturday, Jan 13, 1 pm - Sunday, Jan 14, 9 am
Youth Sunday Planning Lock-In

Sunday, January 28, 12:45-2:15 pm
Youth Sunday Planning

Sunday, February 11, 12:45-2:15 pm
Youth Sunday Planning

Sunday, February 18, 12:45-2:15 pm
Youth Sunday Planning

Saturday, February 24, 2-4 pm
Youth Sunday Rehearsal

Sunday, February 25
Youth Sunday at Both Services!

Service Journey Events in the Winter and Spring

We have four more brunches coming up to fundraise for the Service Journey. We will continue to hold them on second Sundays. They are January 14, March 11, April 8, and May 13. Service Journey families, please mark your calendars for a special Service Journey Lock-In, beginning Saturday, March 17. Youth going on the service journey will have this special opportunity to prepare, bond and discuss the upcoming trip.

Elizabeth

Intention & Spiritual Practices

Joel Tishken, Intern Minister

For years I felt that my desire and intention for spiritual practices was greater than my familiarity with them. By this I mean that my interest was high, but my knowledge was low and limited to a handful of practices common to our culture, such as prayer, reading scripture, and meditation. Perhaps you too have felt similarly, now or in the past, and craved spiritual exercises, but could not find ones that suited you. Because Unitarian Universalism embraces religious freedom of the individual, we do not possess an obvious and widespread set of spiritual practices outside of collective worship, in the way some other religions do. What is likely the easiest path to a spiritual practice is by adding intentional mindfulness to the passions you already hold.

Mindfulness is fully bringing our attention to the experience of the present moment. The opposite of mindfulness would be to engage in tasks on auto-pilot, without thought or awareness. In what has become a famous example of mindfulness and intentionality, Zen Buddhist monk and author Thich Nhat Hanh wrote in *Creating True Peace* (pgs. 143-44) about eating an orange as a spiritual exercise of mindfulness. We could simply eat an orange as a piece of food. Or, says Hanh, we could eat the orange meditatively, appreciating it as a miracle of nature that nourishes us. Peel it and focus on how it feels. Smell it. Savor it as you eat it. Imagine the sun and rain it took to nourish the fruit. Imagine the tree that carefully produced it. One has to be intentional to eat an orange in this manner. But that level of mindfulness transforms the experience from an everyday mundane action to a spiritual exercise employing intentionality and mindfulness.

I have found mindfulness useful in my regular walks in Nature. Sometimes I approach it simply as a walk in nature that provides exercise and a break from everyday life. But other times I intentionally approach the walk differently, taking my time and being truly present to the experience. I focus on each of my senses and what they are bringing to my experience. I appreciate individual trees or animals. I reflect about



Nature and my place in it. From the outside, all of my walks look the same. But the intention I bring to particular walks makes them different from one another inside, transforming some into spiritual experiences of Nature reverence. Through intention I transformed something I was already doing regularly into a spiritual practice.

This kind of intentional mindfulness can be applied to most anything. This means we can all create a spiritual practice from out of any of the things we do with our day. For most of us, it is likely easiest to apply intentionality and mindfulness to those things we have the most passion for. The book *Everyday Spiritual Practices*, edited by UU minister Scott Alexander, offers wisdom from many authors discussing how they created spiritual practices from passions like martial arts, quilting, recycling, and cooking, among others. Yet it is not passions alone that can benefit from mindfulness. UU minister Chris Buice, in the book *Roller Skating as a Spiritual Discipline* (pgs. 12-14) suggests we should be mindful about everything we do, even unpleasant tasks like changing a diaper. If we do not, we will constantly put off joy because there are always more unpleasant or mundane tasks to be done.

So it is not necessarily what you are doing that provides the potential for a spiritual practice. It is how you are doing it that matters. With intention and mindfulness, most anything, for some people even unpleasant things, can become a spiritual practice. Studies have shown that the practice of mindfulness is closely correlated with greater well-being and a reduction in depression and anxiety. We can all benefit from being more intentional.

Joel

Splinters from the Board - Looking to the Future

Exploring faith. Practicing Inclusivity. Living Justice.

“If you do not change direction, you may end up where you are heading.” --Lao Tzu

We made it through 2017! As we begin 2018, the Board of Trustees continues to work on transition from a pastoral to a program church. It has sometimes been a bumpy road, and I think that we all agree that we can and should work to make the process of change more about gain than pain. One way is to broaden our perspective.

When I get up early to go to the first service on Sunday mornings, my immediate desire is to turn off the alarm and sleep in. Of course, that is my immediate desire on most days. What helps me get up on Sundays is that I see my participation in the early service as something more than a burden. I try to keep two things in mind: our mission and vision and the long-range welfare of the church.

I believe that we began our experiment with two services as a way of living our Mission and Vision, in particular, as a way of “Practicing Inclusivity.” I am convinced that we need to expand our capacity to welcome the many people in our community that need us. Adding a second service is part of that, but there is more to it.

As we discussed and debated the addition of another service, the congregation realized that we need to gain a clearer vision of our long-range goals. Where do we want to be in five years? What do we envision for our church? As one step in that process, the Board has approved a long-range planning task force to guide the process and we have recruited the members of the task force. You will be hearing more about this very soon.

Meanwhile, I believe that one reason that we voted to add a second service was because we saw it as an investment in the future. I hope that you have made it to an early service. If you have, you know that there is a more relaxed and intimate atmosphere that is very nourishing to the spirit. If you haven't, give it a try! It's one investment that pays immediate dividends.

A second part of making change more welcome is our continued work on a relationship covenant for the church. Many members and friends have asked us to provide more information about this process, and we will be doing so. Our December board meeting produced some insights about the relationship covenant that we will be sharing with you in the coming weeks.

We recognize that our journey is often bumpy. We are building the road as we go! A lesson that you keep teaching the Board is, “Listen, listen, listen!” The members of the Board try to listen as carefully as we can and respond with as much encouragement and sensitivity as we can. But we can do better. So to end one year and begin another, let us revisit the Vision that we all endorse: *We, the Unitarian Universalist Church of Muncie, are a church family, relating to one another with love, kindness, fellowship, humility, joy and generosity.*

- We encourage open, lifelong religious exploration, drawing upon reason, spirituality, and curiosity.
- We strengthen one another, offering acceptance, nourishment, and mutual support.
- We welcome people of all identities, regardless of age, class, culture, race, ableness, gender identity, or sexual orientation.
- We seek deeper, stronger, more transformative relationships that foster growth and healing for ourselves, our church, and our communities.
- We promote social justice, serving as a force for good and for lasting societal change.
- We serve as stewards of our church, this country, and the world.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Jerry McKean, President

Anti-Racism Work & Unitarian Universalism since 2015

Joel Tishken, Intern Minister

Two sets of events happened within Unitarian Universalism since 2015 that have elevated anti-racism work and awareness of white supremacy within our faith.

The first was the formation of Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism (BLUU) in September 2015. The formation occurred after about twenty black UUs attended the Movement for Black Lives Convening at Cleveland State University in July of that year. It was when speaking at the Black Lives Convening that a number of black UUs discovered how few of them attended a local congregation. They found it too painful and isolating to be the only, or close to the only, black person in an overwhelmingly white setting. From this awareness, BLUU formed with the goal to “work to expand the role and visibility of black UUs within our faith” (from BLUU website). To support their efforts, the UUA Board of Trustees, in a special board meeting in May 2016, designated BLUU as the recipient of the Saturday morning offering at the Columbus General Assembly in 2017. A funding goal of \$60,000 was set, with the UUA pledging to fill in any shortfall. Rev. Carlton Elliott Smith, a member of the Black Lives of UU Organizing Collective, noted that the balance of the funds would support programming and staffing in 2017 and beyond, including a Black Lives of UU convening in late 2017 or early 2018. In response to the funding Smith said, “With the specialized Black Lives UU track and the financial assistance available this year, we hope that black UUs who have never been to GA or haven’t been in a long while will feel more welcome than ever.”

Two founding members of the BLUU organizing collective, Leslie Mac and Smith, gave a presentation to the UUA board in October 2016. In the presentation, they requested \$5.3 million dollars of funding, which would be the contemporary value of the \$1 million the 1968 General Assembly promised to BAC (see the article on black empowerment in last month’s Unigram for further detail). The funding was

ultimately approved as a guarantee from the board against the endowment. Afterwards, a number of trustees and UUA officers expressed their happiness in the decision, despite the financial risk. They remarked that a funding plan and campaign would highlight BLUU and the continued need for anti-racism work within UU. Both representatives from BLUU and members of the board remarked upon the black empowerment controversy of the late 1960s and early 1970s and saw the approval of the funding as a means of completing what was started then. Of the \$5.3 million, \$300,000 was provided for immediate use to support the BLUU Convening in New Orleans in March 2017. The remaining \$5 million in long-term funds will go toward ongoing work, including creating healing spaces, growing more opportunities for pastoral care, continuing to develop relationships with non-black UUs of color, providing resources for white anti-racism work among UUs, and providing direct support to congregations during times of racialized conflict.

It was amid BLUU’s early activity that another issue emerged, entirely unrelated except by matters of race. In early March 2016, a white male, Rev. Andy Burnette, a UUA trustee and senior minister of Valley UU Congregation in Chandler, Arizona, was hired as leader of Congregational Life for the Southern Region. One of the finalists, Christina Rivera—director of administration and finance at Thomas Jefferson Memorial Church UU in Charlottesville, Virginia, and a UUA trustee who is Chicana Latina, revealed to colleagues at the Finding Our Way Home retreat on March 17 that she had been a finalist for the job but had been told she was not “the right fit for the team.” Over the next week, complaints spread on social media that the UUA had hired another white male. Critics pointed out that the five regional leads, who supervise the fifty members of the UUA’s Congregational Life staff,

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Intent vs. Impact

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

Asian or Indian descent, visits for the first time, and is asked, sometimes more than once, “where are you from?” “Chicago.” “No, before that, where are you from?” “Well I grew up in Spokane, Washington.” “No really, where are you FROM?” “I told you, I was born and grew up in Spokane. I moved to Chicago for undergrad, and lived there for ten years until I moved here.” “Oh.” The impact of interactions such as these on people of color can be incredibly harmful, often making them feel other and like they do not belong, despite being U.S. citizens who were born and raised in our country. The intent vs. impact idea comes into play when the well-intentioned person who was asking “no really, where are you from?” is made aware of the impact of their actions and their response is along the lines of, “but, I didn’t mean anything negative. In fact I was trying to be friendly and welcoming. I don’t think I did anything wrong.” The problem is, it’s not just the intent of our actions that matter, it’s also the impact. We’re still responsible for the impact of our actions, even if our intent is positive.

Which brings us to the second service a couple of weeks ago. For those of you who were there, you probably recall a cell phone going off while I was speaking. This happens every so often during church services, and while of course it’s not preferred, it’s also no big deal, accidents happen. My standard operating procedure is to ignore it and keep moving. It just so happened though that this ringing cell phone belonged to someone sitting in the front row, right in front of me, and it was particularly loud. Worried that some folks might not be able to hear, I paused for a second, and then when it stopped, I was about to keep going. Then it rang a second time – and so I looked up, and laughed to myself a little bit internally, to see that that the cell phone in question belonged to, of all people, our President of the Board of Trustees, Jerry McKean. Given the second ring, the pause had been long enough that I felt I ought to say something, and the standard joke in these situations popped into my head – I almost said “it must be god calling.” I was aware in the moment though that our secular humanists perhaps might not appreciate that, and so in an attempt to try and find something better, decided to just say something to Jerry directly. Part of my split second decision-making was that Jerry and I have a strong working relationship – the Board President and the Minister meet once a week during the church year – and I was pretty sure he would be fine with it. So, I

processed through all of that in about a second, and then I said, “wow, that must be an important phone call Jerry.” As expected, cue laughter... and then I continued on.

During the hymn that followed, I realized that despite my split-second evaluation that Jerry would almost certainly be fine, I should probably check in with him. So while we were all singing, I walked over to Jerry and said, “Hey, sorry, I didn’t mean to put you on the spot, are you ok?” Jerry responded that he was totally fine, we side-hugged, and we kept singing. So my intent was positive, it was just to make light of the situation in the moment, and the impact on Jerry was not harmful – a week later he was still fine with it, noting, “I think the whole thing was pretty funny.” So intent, positive, impact, positive. Everything ok? Not actually. Because other people present were also impacted – and my attempt at humor struck some of them, some of you, as inappropriate and uncomfortable. Intent, positive, impact, negative. So clearly, I need to, and do, take responsibility.

I apologize to all to whom I caused distress by my attempt at joking. I realize that some of you experienced my behavior as shaming, and that my strong relationship with Jerry, and his “ok-ness” with my joke, doesn’t change how it felt to you. Especially if some of you are worried that I might single you out in the future if your phone happens to go off – please, no need to worry. I’m not planning on changing my standard operating procedure of ignoring, and given the impact of the joke I made about Jerry, I certainly will not even on rare occasions make that same choice again. In the bigger picture, hopefully it’s easy to see through my failure in this example that awareness of intent vs. impact doesn’t always keep us from making mistakes, so it’s important to try and stay mindful of the impact of our actions.

As we continue our exploration of January’s theme of Intention as a church community, I hope we can continue to pay attention to the idea of intent vs. impact in all of our lives, and take responsibility for both. I also look forward to exploring this, and many other aspects of intent and intention, together with you this month.

Just so you all know, I’ll be on vacation visiting family the first two weeks of January, returning to the pulpit on the 14th of January. I look forward to seeing you in church! peace, love and blessings,

Rev. Seth

The Intention of No Intention

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

some idea, and stretching out to meet it," (*First Universalist Church of Minneapolis Order of Service*).

Nonetheless, the term "stretching out" called up a different image for me. That image was one of how animals stretch out in a puddle of sunlight, resting, relaxing, and soaking in its healing and restorative warmth. Now maybe this had something to do with our being in the middle of the first wintry spell of the season. Perhaps it had to do with our upcoming Florida trip being on my mind a lot lately. But it carried a deeper meaning as well. That image drew me in. And with that, I think I found my intention for the present. Stop. Just stop. Live more fully into accepting that who I am and what I do is in fact good enough. Let it be. Make this the January of no resolutions whatsoever!

The January issues of many magazines – at least those that are addressed to a female audience – are rife with articles about self-improvement. I can't speak to whether the same applies in magazines addressed to men. We're encouraged to improve our bodies, our minds, our emotional state, the level of clutter in our houses, and the list goes on. Culturally, New Years resolutions are "in."

In some ways, our UU faith and mindset encourages us in this project of self-betterment as well. We're a people of purpose, of goals, of dreams and hopes for our world, and of determination to make them reality. We affirm a free and responsible search for truth and meaning, and encourage one another to spiritual growth. Doesn't that mean "working on it"? Growing our spirituality as we grow and learn? I wonder if we sometimes overlook the "acceptance of one another" clause in that Principle, or neglect to apply it to ourselves too. It means acceptance of ourselves and others, just the way we are. Further, we're an intelligent bunch and many of us are highly educated. Most of us value the life of the mind. We value living our lives with intention.

We're also striving as a congregation to be a better church. To offer two services. To bridge the gap. To be greener and more socially involved. At our staff retreat this year, as we've done in the past, we brainstormed to create a list of the things we had accomplished in the past church year. It was an impressive list, too. A

summary of it is in our lobby. Read through it if you haven't done so. We've been busy!

I'm not arguing with any of this, on a personal or congregational level. It's all good. But life has its seasons, its ebb and flow, its own rhythm. There is a time to work and a time to rest, a time for doing and a time for being. A time to forge ahead and a time to stay still. Even now, in the darkness and chill of winter, there are seeds lying in the frozen ground, waiting, as they must do. That is the way of life.

Steve Garnaas-Holmes' evocative reflection speaks to how I feel:

I lay down the backpack,
quit the journey to the far place.
I set aside the pick and shovel,
the coded treasure map.
I renounce the person I want to become,
abdicate mastery of my fate.
I rest my fears, desires and intentions.
Even the angel within me,
wings tightly wrapped, rests.
Already a holy vessel,
I rest with the Presence I hold.
I rest in this:

You, I AM,
in me,
becoming,
and I allowing. (<https://goo.gl/cXXq3M>)

Care to join me?

Rev. Julia



"Unitarianism" Harshman Panel
Photo by Gunther Cartwright

Anti-Racism Work & Unitarian Universalism since 2015

Joel Tishken, Intern Minister (continued from page 7)

were all white male ministers.

UUA president Peter Morales responded to the controversy in a letter to all UUA staff on March 27, that soon circulated across social media. In the letter Morales acknowledged that much more improvement in hiring practices needed to be made and there was some validity in the criticisms. But he also pointed out that in the controversy we were losing sight of the recent progress that had been made. President Morales indicated that the percent of staff who are people of color has risen from 14 percent in 2008 to 20 percent today, with a corresponding rise in the number of managers who are people of color from 5 to 9 percent. Morales expressed dismay that UUA staff were being “othered” and criticized with incomplete information, leaving them feel personally attacked.

Additional controversy brewed in response to the letter of Morales. Formal letters of protest came from BLUU, a group of Latinx religious professionals, DRUUM, and Allies for Racial Equity, among others. Many UUs felt the president’s letter revealed that he did not get the nature of the protests. Amid the flare-up, President Morales announced his resignation effective April 1. In his resignation he apologized for reacting when he should have listened. He further acknowledged that his letter made matters worse. He insisted that the decision was his own and had not been encouraged by anyone. Two more senior staff—the Rev. Harlan Limpert, chief operating officer, and the Rev. Scott Tayler, director of Congregational Life, announced their resignations on April 5. UUA moderator Jim Key announced he was stepping down the next day, for health reasons. In just the span of a week, the UUA had lost its president, moderator, and two high-ranking staff members. On April 9, Andy Burnette announced he was declining the position. In executive session on April 10, the UUA board appointed three interim co-presidents—the Rev. Sofia Betancourt, Rev. William Sinkford, and Dr. Leon Spencer—to serve until the time of election in late June. In response to all that had happened, religious

educators encouraged congregations to have white supremacy teach-ins. UUCM has conducted two so far, the first led by Rev. Elizabeth Carrier-Ladd, on June 11, and the second on October 15, led by Rev. Seth Carrier-Ladd.

Was the selection of Burnette over Rivera racist? Since Rivera was told she was qualified, and she was a finalist, she was convinced that it was. In particular, she pointed to use of the phrase that she was “not the right fit for the team” as coded language that she was not like the person doing the hiring. In the end there is no way for us to know for certain whether or not the decision was racist. Those with legal access to the job applications cannot speak about them, and the rest of us cannot see the files. There came a point, however, where the particulars of a single situation were no longer the most significant issue. The controversy had highlighted a shameful fact. While the UUA had indeed made progress in the diversity of its staff hires, people of color made up no more than 11 percent of any rank of UUA employees except service workers, where they are 84 percent of employees. So the numbers obscure the fact that the progress has not led to a change in the overall power structure. People of color had indeed been hired, but at the lowest ranks of the UUA. In the end, this is what the controversy lifted up that became so significant. Controversy regarding whether or not one hiring decision was or was not racist drew attention to an overall pattern of racially imbalanced hiring decisions at the UUA.

Events in March and April moved rapidly, touching old pains, and raising new pains and questions among Unitarian Universalists. Confidence in the UUA was shaken. Some UUs, particularly people of color, expressed dismay not just in the UUA but in Unitarian Universalism as a faith. To promote healing and offer leadership at a time of uncertainty, the 2017 General Assembly in New Orleans was devoted to anti-racism. At General Assembly, BLUU received the President’s Award for Volunteer Service. Presenter of the award, co-president Dr. Spencer, stated that BLUU “has given us a ‘movement moment’” (continued on page 11)

Anti-Racism Work & Unitarian Universalism since 2015

Joel Tishken, Intern Minister (continued from page 10)

where black people can have their own space as Unitarian Universalists.” He continued by quoting BLUU saying, “Getting there will be uncomfortable, and messy, and impolite — just as work for justice has always been.” Also in New Orleans, the UUA board unanimously authorized a legally-binding memorandum of understanding between the UUA and BLUU to fulfill the board’s promise of \$5.3 million in funding. The memorandum allows five years for fund-raising to raise the money.

An announcement was made in New Orleans that Brad and Julie and Bradburd, UUs for more than sixty years, pledged \$1 million toward the \$5.3 million. The pledge came with a matching challenge to congregations. The Bradburds would match donations from congregations up to \$1 million. But only those congregations which donate an amount equal to \$10 per member would count toward the matching donation of the Bradburds. The co-presidents launched the campaign “The Promise and the Practice of Our Faith,” encouraging congregations to plan a worship service dedicated to racial justice in fall or winter of 2017-28, with a special collection toward the matching donation effort. UUCM is holding its service on February 4th. For our own donation to count toward the matching donation, UUCM will need to donate \$2200.

And the work continues...

Further reading:

May 2016, “Board votes \$60,000 to support black UUs to attend GA 2016” - <https://goo.gl/wQ2ZMh>

Oct 2016, “UUA Board of Trustees commits \$5.3 million to Black Lives of UU” - <https://goo.gl/8NAW1K>

April 2017, “Further updates to UUA resignations and controversy over hiring practices” - <https://goo.gl/H9vbhA>

June 2017, “UUA board approves funding plan for Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism” - <https://goo.gl/rBrF31>

Sept 2017, “Bradburds donate \$1 million for BLUU” - <https://goo.gl/WVMu8z>

MLK Day of Service at Second Harvest and Soup Lunch at the Church!

Monday, January 15, 2018 is our biggest volunteer day of the year! Come on out from **10 am to 12 noon**, for an MLK Day of Service at the **Second Harvest Food Bank Warehouse** (6621 N Old State Rd 3, Muncie, IN 47303).

The last several years we've had over 50 people show up to volunteer and turn their day OFF into a day ON for service. All ages are welcome, including kids!

We never know what we'll be asked to do (we've relabeled cans, boxed groceries, and gone through cabbages) but we know that our group efforts will make a difference in helping that worthy organization achieve its goals of helping the food insecure. Second Harvest is expecting a big group. **Let's make sure we don't let them down.**

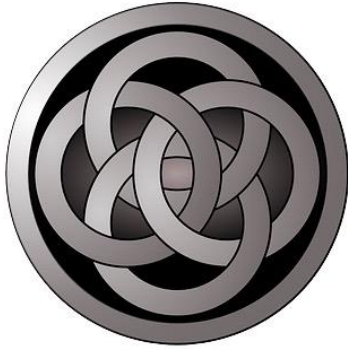
Each volunteer has to fill out a Volunteer Information/Waiver form. While they'll have print copies there you can use, it speeds the process if you can print out forms and bring them in, all filled out for each person in your family. So please watch your eBlast early in January for a link to the form.

Then, after our two hours at the warehouse, be sure to come back to the church for our traditional post-volunteering **soup luncheon**.

In all, a great opportunity to do good together, and then chow down!

RSVPs are appreciated so Second Harvest and the lunch crew are ready for us. Just contact **Susan Taylor** (susantaylor68@hotmail.com or 741-8711).

Thanks for all you do!
Feeding Our Hungry Neighbors Task Force
Social Justice Committee



Wheel of Life

On December 16, with her proud family & friends (including grandparents **Nan & John Barber**) cheering her on, **Laura Lee Williams** graduated from Ball State University with a degree in Exercise Science. She will return to Phoenix to work as show director for the dance company where she has been teaching while completing her internship. In June 2018 she plans to move to Chicago. Big changes for my tiny dancer! ~**Christie Williams**

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.

Sharing Gratitude

Our viewing of the documentary *Reel Injun* on November 29, stimulated thoughtful conversation thanks to discussion leader **Ben Strack**. Thank you also to **John Bartlett** for running sights & sounds that evening. ~**Joel Tishken**

Many thanks to our Santa Lucia helpers! Many thanks to **Liz Lowe** for carrying on the tradition of arriving early on Saturday to make the saffron dough with the help of **Judy Lowe, Judy Craig** and **Linda Morton** – and to the many friends that arrived to help with the shaping and decorating of the buns: **Maggie, John, Madison & Sarah Bartlett, Stephanie Dillinger, Lisa Dwenger, Katie Frederick, Elsbeth Fritz, Phil Gift, Andrea Gonzalez, Taylor Gonzalez, Eleanor Johnson, Velvet Miller, Elsa Reichle, Mike & Caroline Sullivan,** and **Cindy & Jeff Turner**. And also many thanks to our beautiful Santa Lucia, **Annika Schaller**, and to our Star Children that ranged in ages from high school all the way to our youngest in the nursery! The procession at each service was magical! ~**Nadine Tringali**

Caroling was a huge success! We had around 45 folks come out to serenade the season. Thanks so much to all who participated. Put it on your calendar for next year: always the Tuesday before Christmas. ~**Jim Helton**

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."



Help Is Needed in Childcare!

Childcare is offered every Sunday from 8:45 am-12:45 pm, for infants through five year olds (even when RE classes don't meet!), and for special events such as meetings, the Bazaar, and the Harvest Feast. If you are interested in spending this special time with the youngest attendees of our church, **Christie McCauley** would really appreciate the help!

Email her at childcare@uuchurchmuncie.org, or stop by the Nursery before first service or after second for more information and to apply or volunteer for a position in childcare.

January 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	10:00 am
Stewardship Committee	Tuesdays	4:00 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

January Events & Activities

Visitors Q&A	Sunday	Jan 7	10:30 & 12:45
Social Justice Committee	Monday	Jan 8	7:00 pm
Program Council	Wednesday	Jan 10	7:00 pm
Youth Sunday Planning Lock In	Saturday	Jan 13	1:00 pm
Service Journey Fundraiser Brunch	Sunday	Jan 14	10:15 am
Chalice Marketplace	Sunday	Jan 14	10:15 am
RE Committee	Sunday	Jan 14	12:45 pm
Roots & Wings :: New Member Class	Sunday	Jan 14	12:45 pm
Church Office Closed :: MLK Day	Monday	Jan 15	
MLK Day of Service / Soup Lunch	Monday	Jan 15	10:00 am
Feeding Our Hungry Neighbors Task Force	Tuesday	Jan 16	7:15 pm
Board of Trustees	Wednesday	Jan 17	6:30 pm
Committee on Ministries	Thursday	Jan 18	7:15 pm
New Member Signing Ceremony	Sunday	Jan 21	10:45 am
Adult Discussion Committee	Sunday	Jan 21	12:45 pm
Unigram Submission Deadline	Wednesday	Jan 24	9:00 am
Membership Committee	Thursday	Jan 25	7:00 pm
Combined Youth Groups	Sunday	Jan 28	12:45 pm
Worship Associates	Wednesday	Jan 31	7:30 pm

Sanctuary Choir

January is a great time to join the choir! We will resume our rehearsals on Tuesday, January 9. Rehearsals are 7:30 – 9:00. Please contact Jim Helton if you have questions.

Service Journey

Fundraising Brunch! January 14, 10:15 am

Join us for Brunch between the services! We will have breakfast casseroles, salad and fruit available. All donations will go to support the High School youth's Service Journey to Arizona and Mexico in June 2018. Share some fellowship time with those attending both services and supporting this important program!

If you would like to contribute to the fundraiser by bringing food or helping with set up and serving or clean up, that is also wonderful! Watch your eBlast for the link to sign up.

UU Book Club

The next reading of the UU Church book discussion group will be Isabella: The Warrior Queen by Kirsten Downey, 2014. We will read this book in two parts because of its length. The first discussion period will be on Thursday, January 11th, the second discussion on Thursday, February 8th, both at the home of **Annemarie Voss**.

UUCM Staff & Leadership

Rev. Seth Carrier-Ladd, Minister

seth@uuchurchmuncie.org

Rev. Julia Corbett-Hemeyer, Community Minister

julia@uuchurchmuncie.org

Joel Tishken, Intern Minister

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Nadine Tringali, Director of Religious Education

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Christie Williams, Office Administrator

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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

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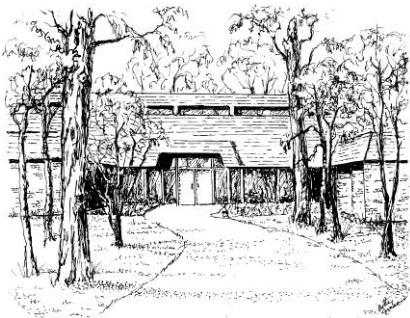
Youth Representative

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

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