



the UNIGRAM

“Bless you.”

Rev. Seth Carrier-Ladd, Minister

“Bless you.” “Bless you.” “Bless you.” “Bless you.” The quiet was quickly filled with a veritable cascade, a shower, of blessings, after a stray sneeze emerged from me during my morning yoga class last week. For many if not most who say it, offering a “bless you” when someone sneezes is the automatic, polite response. We don’t typically give much thought though to what a blessing actual is or means, nor do we typically talk much about blessings on a day-to-day basis. What does it mean to bless someone? What does it mean to receive a blessing? Why do we bless houses, or marriages, or children? And perhaps most importantly, if we do offer blessings, where do they come from?

I look forward to exploring these questions together with you this month as we examine this month’s theme of Blessing, but for now will simply offer one definition of blessing which speaks to me, which I gratefully received from my colleague and Unitarian Universalist minister, Rev. Scott Taylor. Scott suggests that blessings are a transfer of power, a gift of some sort of goodness... whether that gift be the gift of god’s presence, or simply the gift of our own love, or maybe just the gift of kindness. A blessing offered is the transfer of the power of that goodness, whatever it

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Blessing and Blessings

Rev. Julia Corbett-Hemeyer, Community Minister

ACHOO!! The sudden sneeze startled everyone, perhaps none more than the one who sneezed. “Bless you!” “Gesundheit!” “God bless you!” several of those within hearing distance responded. Did they think about what that predictable phrase meant? I doubt it. Blessing someone who sneezes originated in folk belief. Some people believed that a sneeze caused the soul to escape the body through the nose. Saying “bless you” would stop the devil from claiming the person’s disembodied soul. Others believed the opposite: that evil spirits could use the sneeze as an opportunity to enter a person’s body.

I seriously doubt if any of us reading this believe anything of that sort. But what is going on with blessing? Reverend Seth frequently ends our services with “Go and be blessed and be a blessing.” A hasty scan through our UU Worship Web reveal that contributors to that site have written blessings for risk-takers and failures, those divorced or separated, meals, houses, new church buildings, justice builders, the sky, new drivers, playgrounds, teachers’ hands, all living things, “life and the end of life,” bicycles, bodies, the world, and backpacks, among others.

Most of humankind’s religious and spiritual traditions engage in some form of blessing. The daily cycle of blessings that Orthodox Jewish men say is

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Sunday Mornings at Our Church in the Woods

Service at 10:45 am

June Theme :: Blessing

Our June theme of Blessing invites us to consider what it means to receive a blessing, as well as to consider the many blessings in our lives. This year June also brings many special celebrations and ceremonies. On Sunday, June 3rd, we will hold our Volunteer Appreciation ceremony. Sunday, June 10th will be our intern minister Joel’s last Sunday, and he will lead us in a special multi-generational service. Sunday the 17th is Father’s Day, and we’ll hold our annual end-of-church-year Flower Ceremony that day as well. Throw in two child dedications, one each on the 3rd and the 10th, and we’ve got a busy month celebrating the many blessings of the year and of life in front of us!

June 3, 17 – Rev. Seth Carrier-Ladd

June 10 – Joel Tishken, Intern Minister

June 24 – Rev. Julia Corbett-Hemeyer, Community Minister

Religious Education for Children & Youth

Classes at 10:45 am

Here is what is coming up this month in RE:

June 3 – Flower Sunday! Our youth and children will be planting flowers for the east entrance of the church. They will also decorate a flower pot to take home, with a flower of their choice.

June 10 – Multigenerational Service. Please join us this morning for a special multigenerational service! On Multi-Gen Sundays, the services are for all ages. Childcare will be available in the Blue room for preschool & kindergarten youth.

June 17 – Game Day! Come dressed to move! We will have activities set up outside, weather permitting.

June 24 – Clay Day! Bring your creative spirit!

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 10](#).

Every Sunday, 9:30 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 – Blessing

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 meditation titled “Earth” by UU minister Rev. Mark Belletini:

This is our earth.
 It falls through heaven like a pearl
 in a glass of plum wine.
 There are no other earths that I know of.
 There are no other skies that we have mapped.
 This is our earth.
 The Oneness who gave birth to it
 remains nameless.
 There was no midwife then
 to bring us word of the birth-cry.
 We only rejoice that it is.
 This is our earth.
 Ice caps its head. Glaciers clasp its feet.
 Warm wind, like the breath of a lover,
 breathes around its breast.
 Mountains thrust up to the clouds,
 bringing joy.
 Storms blow across its shores,
 bringing fear.
 Silvery fish capture sunlight
 and bring it down into the deep,
 as on shore, valleys spread
 with ripening fruit. Cities teem
 with the poor and disenfranchised
 in the shadow of golden towers.
 Children live and also die.
 Highways throb. Monks sit in silence.
 Mothers work. Crickets chirp.
 Teachers plan. Engineers design.
 Fathers write letters.
 People marry
 with and without the blessings of law.
 People cry.
 They laugh, and brood, and worry
 and wait.
 This is our earth.
 There are no other earths.
 Before its wonder, philosophers
 fall silent.
 Before its mystery,
 poets admit their words are shadow,
 not light.
 And all the great names religious
 teachers have left to us—
 Ishtar, Shekinah, Terra Mater,
 Suchness, Wakan Tanka, Gaia—
 suddenly refuse to announce themselves.
 And so we too fall silent,
 entering the time where words end
 and reality begins.

Questions for Reflection

Is it time to embrace yourself as a blessing once again? We all forget sometimes. We all let others' definitions of worth determine how we feel about our own. The work of seeing ourselves as a blessing is ongoing. How do you need to re-claim or re-name your blessing to the world?

Some say a blessing is anything that helps us remember who we really are. We most often lose ourselves in work or relationships that ask us to be something we're not. Is it time to bless yourself and find yourself by saying goodbye to a job or a relationship that doesn't bless and see you?

What was your biggest “unexpected blessing moment”? When did a blessing surprise and sustain you in the midst of pain? What gift or lesson from that story do you need to most remember today?

Resources for Going Deeper

Video: “Responding to the Blessing of Life’s Beauty” - TED talk and video meditation. Nature’s beauty can be fleeting – but not through Louie Schwartzberg’s lens. He shares his stunning time-lapse photography and invites us into a video meditation on being grateful for every day. <https://bit.ly/1qIWnP3>

Book: [The Gentle Art of Blessing: A Simple Practice That Will Transform You and Your World](https://amzn.to/2JibfSY) by Pierre Pradervand <https://amzn.to/2JibfSY>

Spiritual or Reflective Practice

One of the most famous Blessing Lists comes from The Sound of Music and the song, *My Favorite Things*. The point of the song is that ordinary blessings save us. “We don’t feel so sad” the song says. We also don’t feel so isolated, anxious or disconnected from life. As we notice the ordinary blessings around us, we experience life as a generous friend not a threatening foe. Or to use theological language, ordinary blessings communicate to us that in some mysterious way we are the beloved of the spirit at the heart of life. When we focus on our *favorite* things, it can

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Religious Education Corner

Nadine Tringali
Director of Religious Education

Congratulations to our awesome Coming of Age youth, who so confidently articulated their faith statements at their COA Service on Sunday, May 20! Congratulations to our youth, parents, mentors and facilitators!

Upcoming Summer Program for Children and Youth July & August

Our RE Summer Camp, led by **Maggie Bartlett**, will be offering "Books and Cooks," a cultural cooking class built around storybooks from around the world. Each class includes a story, a blessing, cooking, and eating. All of the food is vegetarian and nut-free. This multiage program is geared for grades K-5, but youth in grades 6-12 are very welcome to join us! Childcare for preschool youth will be in the Blue Room. Please consider assisting one or two Sundays!

Our Whole Lives (OWL) Sexuality Education Program for 10-12 grade youth

We would like to offer OWL 10-12 grade this coming fall. Please let me know if you would be interested. Our certified OWL facilitators are **Ben** and **Denise Ewing**.

Nadine



Summer Youth Schedule

Rev. Elizabeth Carrier-Ladd
Coordinator of Youth Programs

Friday, June 1, 5-8:00 pm
 End of Year Party at The Carrier-Ladd Home
 We will grill! Bring a side dish to share. Don't miss our annual Gummy Bear Ritual!

Saturday, June 16, 6:00 pm
 UUCM Youth go to the Moonlight Movies showing of The Lion King
 Join us on Canaan Commons. Bring a snack to share. We will spread out a bunch of blankets. Singing along is allowed.

Thursday, June 28, 10:00 am
 Hiking Excursion at Mounds
 Details will be emailed to parents.

Thursday, July 12, 10:00 am
 Marion Splash House Trip
 Details will be emailed to parents.

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.

Redefining Blessing

Joel Tishken, Intern Minister

I suspect that the idea of blessing may be one that some UUs struggle with theologically. As Unitarian Universalists, we have in some ways moved very far away from our Christian heritage and in some others we have not. For instance, our model of religious education, our polity, and our order of service are little different from the Universalism or Unitarianism from which we inherited them.

Yet in other ways we have significantly redefined some of our inheritance. For example, while we inherited the concept of worship from Christianity, we have redirected it and changed its connotation, bringing it closer to its original meaning. The word *worship* comes from the Old English word *weorþscipe* (or *worth-ship*), meaning worthiness, or the honor shown to an object. At its most basic, then, worship simply means giving worth to something. In Christianity that object is obviously god. That association is what causes some UUs to struggle with use of the word. However, in Unitarian Universalism we have collectively redirected that which has worthiness to humanity, our community, and our congregations. We believe in the inherent **worth** and dignity of every person, as our First Principle articulates. Individual UUs may wish to honor additional things or beings that suit their own theology. But together we have returned worship more to its original meaning to honor something, without necessarily any supernatural connotations. Similarly, we have redefined theology, church, hymn, covenant, and our approach to religious writings to better fit Unitarian Universalism and our plural theology.

The same is true for the concept of blessing. In Christianity, blessings are presumed to ultimately derive from god. Priests, or others, can become conduits for that blessing, but are not the source of it. So what does a non-Christian or nontheist UU do with the idea of blessing being a divine domain? Just because the term has strong Christian connotations in our culture does not mean we need to jettison the



word or idea and “throw the baby out with the bathwater.” As with other aspects of our Christian inheritance, including worship, we can redefine blessing to reflect Unitarian Universalist plurality and personal nontheist theologies.

I think of blessing as praising, extolling, or wishing someone or something well. Such a notion of blessing retains the idea that a blessing is something one person orally bestows upon other people or things. A secular blessing can be applied to a person, a group, a community, an event, a meal, an endeavor, a place...most anything really. What is redefined in this notion of blessing is the source of the blessing. The source for this kind of blessing is ourselves. A blessing does not need to derive from something supernatural to be real and meaningful. We have the power to apply positive intentions and good wishes to people or things that have a real impact on outcomes. Offering a secular blessing does not mean we believe we have actual mystical powers to pass along. But much like wishing someone luck, a secular blessing conveys positivity from one-to-another, shares our good intentions, and communicates our caring to people, institutions, and communities. So please, bless away!

Joel

Splinters from the Board

Exploring faith. Practicing inclusivity. Living justice.

I like Seth.

I beg your indulgence. As President of the Congregation, I think it appropriate to use my last “Splinters” to write a little about the minister, who is, as you may have heard, sometimes the topic of spirited discussion. I know that I am discussing something that involves hurt and anger for many, and I in no way wish to minimize the problems. But I also think that I have some things to share that might move us in the direction of healing. So I am not going to get into what’s wrong very much. We have named our concerns and now we can move to solutions. Please note that my opinions are entirely my own, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of other members of the board.

As President, I meet with the minister weekly (or as often as needed). In these meetings, we review important events happening at church and give each other feedback. My feedback to Rev. Seth includes comments on his performance, especially when I need to bring to his attention some matter affecting the welfare of the church or one of its members. As our professional leader, Seth returns the favor by keeping me apprised of matters that need to come to the board. Our exchanges have been frank but friendly. Sometimes I need to tell Seth something he would probably prefer not to hear, but that he needs to. Again, Seth returns the favor. I am also the frequent recipient of comments or questions about the minister and our ministry from members and friends of the congregation.

I mention this because I think it makes me the layperson in the church who has the most frequent interaction with and about the minister. It gives me a perspective that is somewhat different from that of some other members. I am not claiming that my conclusions are therefore authoritative, but they do have a basis in many encounters.

As I said, I like Seth. When I reflect on him, what emerges is an image that is neither all saint nor all sinner if you will pardon the expression, but a complicated, sometimes contradictory bundle of impulses and aspirations, insight and cluelessness, compassion and impatience, pride and humility, vulnerability and defensiveness, courage and fear.

Come to think of it, Seth kind of reminds me of myself! Most people do. But sometimes my expectations of

ministers differ from my expectations of other people. I expect more from them than I do from others, or for that matter, from myself. I want a minister whose love is better than mine, and I am disappointed when it is merely human love.

If I venture beyond the borders of my expectations and try to see clearly, I see a young man who is far ahead of where I was at this age: strong-willed, almost frightfully intelligent and articulate, and a little green. I see someone of growing insight and compassion who is changing every day as marriage, children, the sought guidance of peers and of our church and its members, shape him and teach him the daily lessons of love and mercy, the pain of mistakes and the need to forgive mistakes by others, the insights of self-reflection, and a constant desire to improve. I see a good but fallible person (and a good minister) striving to become better.

Most importantly, I see something that I think we can all agree is there: I see courage. You have to admit that it takes a lot of guts to be a minister, even more guts to be a UU minister, and even more guts to minister to a church traumatized by its earlier experiences with ministers. It takes courage to try to lead people who often don’t like to be led, even by someone they have called to leadership. It would be easy to take the path of least resistance, but I believe that Seth would argue that it would also be unethical, for it is not a way for the church to grow and prosper, either materially or spiritually.

Seth has also shown the more fundamental courage of which his idol, Brené Brown, writes: “Courage starts with showing up and letting ourselves be seen.” Whether or not you like it, Seth shows up and we see him as he is, complicated contradictions and all. In his sermons (which have been applauded more than once), Seth dares to show us vulnerability by using himself as an example of human shortcomings, and he challenges us to risk vulnerability as well. Note that taking this risk reflects a lot of faith in us.

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Coming on Sunday Mornings This Summer

Each summer while Rev. Seth is on study/vacation leave, the Worship Associates are responsible for the summer services. This year, from July 1 through August 5, our focus will be on one of the sources of Unitarian Universalism: “words and deeds of prophetic men and women.” What does it mean to be prophetic? Traditionally in religion, prophets are believed to be in contact with and speak on behalf of the divine. We accept the broader definition of prophets having a role in society that promotes change. Prophetic men and women, by their lives and words, explore and expose a broader understanding of what it is to be human.

Services this year include the musical talents of Traveler’s Dream (a UU duo from Lafayette, IN); our own **Rev. Elizabeth Carrier-Ladd**, **Juno Farnsworth**, and **Rev. Julia**; **Brandon Mundell** with Independence Day documents and **Bea Sousa & Caroline Sullivan** sharing stories of prophetic women.

We hope you’ll join us!

Coming soon to UUCM and Kennedy Library

Screenings of AN INCONVENIENT SEQUEL (the new Al Gore movie)

The top line of the poster for *An Inconvenient Sequel* tells us to “fight like your world depends on it.” I suppose there are many issues nowadays claiming a similar dire consequence. Nuclear war always detonates into my mind. But for me, climate change is surely one of them. The fate of everybody and everything rests upon the literally vital protection or destruction of our air, water, and the soil of the Earth. The poster’s image of an ominous-looking hourglass in relentless motion reminds us that the climate clock is ticking with frightfully few minutes left in which to act.

On Tuesday, June 5, at Kennedy Library, and Thursday, June 7, at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Muncie (UUCM) - 7 pm at both locations - there will be two cooperative screening-and-discussion programs on *An Inconvenient Sequel: Truth to Power*. (For reviews, just Google *inconvenient sequel truth to power reviews*.)

Our basic UU principles are clear on this subject. Our *goal of world* [global] *community with peace, liberty, and justice for all* (#6) is thoroughly intertwined with *respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part* (#7).

We are pleased and honored to be working with the Muncie Public Library system on this urgent project. Together we are working hard on widespread publicity to try to turn out a good crowd. Please help us out!
1) Plan to attend either session and personally invite and bring along a friend or two or more. 2) Spread this news via your Facebook page and other social media, and so forth. Many thanks.

Wayne Meyer for the Green Team

Theme Exploration

(continued from page 3)

feel like these blessings were created just for us. So take a week and connect to your belovedness by making a list of “your favorite things.” Add at least 2-3 each day. Then share your list with someone you trust. Even better, find a partner to do this exercise with, and share your Blessings Lists with each other.

NOTE: All of this material either comes directly from or is inspired by resources from our Soul Matters packets.

“Bless you.”**Rev. Seth Carrier-Ladd** (continued from page 1)

is, from the person offering, to the person receiving. A blessing of course could also be turned down, it is not something that is forced by one person on another – but we’ll get more into the dynamics of blessings on Sunday mornings this month. For now though, I’d simply like to invite you into the spaciousness of this definition – blessing doesn’t have to mean the gift of god or the gift of god’s presence. It can, and I would suggest does in a Unitarian Universalist context, mean the offering of a gift of goodness.

Our church has offered me so many blessings over the past five years – you all have offered me so many wonderful gifts of love, kindness and joy. The gifts started before I even officially arrived as your minister – the largest part of what drew me to you as a congregation I wanted to serve was your care and kindness towards one another. Even before I began to serve as your minister, that caring and kindness was a gift to me, lifting up the best of what it means to be together in religious community.

Upon our arrival in here in Muncie, you all welcomed me and Elizabeth with open arms, blessing us with your care and support in so many ways. We felt very blessed for the support you offered our budding family. It’s hard to believe looking back, now that we have three little children age four and under running amok, but when we arrived, there were no little Carrier-Ladds alive in the world, at least not on the outside. The first was growing in Elizabeth though, and the baby shower you all threw for us meant the world. The tissue-paper flower garland created by those at the shower, with blessings and hope for the new little life entering the world – that garland has hung for the past five years in our bedroom, reminding us, and now all three of our children, of the love, care and support of our beloved Muncie church community.

The blessings since you welcomed us in so many different and beautiful ways have continued to roll in. I continue to feel blessed by so many offerings from you, from our community. I feel blessed with the musical gifts offered in our congregation, whether those of our talented Music Director, Jim Helton, or the wonderful singing of our choir, or the beautiful melodies shared by members as guest musicians on Sunday mornings.

Music is truly one of the blessing I have been offered, and gratefully received.

And there are so many more. The blessings of fellowship and good times at the Body Life, dinner discussion, the Bazaar, Harvest Feast, and more. The blessings of so many of your stories that you have shared with me, of both success and difficulties, of both joys and sorrows. The blessings of celebrating your marriages, dedicating your children, and even the blessing of companioning you during the loss of a loved one, which while incredibly sad, is also an honor to be entrusted with. The blessing of mission and vision statements, created out of the wisdom and insight of the congregation, that speak to my heart of what it means to be Unitarian Universalist – and of what it means to be a Muncie Unitarian Universalist specifically. The blessing of courage, the courage you exhibited as a congregation to take the risk of trying something new and uncomfortable in adding a second service. The blessing of your care and commitment to Unitarian Universalism, and to our church, even and especially when we have disagreed; it makes my heart glad to know that you care so much to sometimes disagree so strongly.

There are many more blessings I could name – I’ll name only one more for now though, the same blessing that drew me to you, since it remains so important. I am continually humbled and inspired by the level of care, kindness, and support offered freely and graciously to all those who belong to our community. In a world where too often we can feel alone, isolated, attacked, or uncared for, our continual care for one another, the continual striving to do our best to care, even if we sometimes fall short – that is truly a blessing indeed.

You all have offered me and our family so many blessings – I’m going to offer one back to you all right now. Bless you. May you know and receive the gift of goodness, the gift of kindness, the gift of forgiveness, the gift of worthiness, exactly as you are in this moment. Imperfect human being that you are, mistakes and all, shame, fear, and anxiety included – you are deserving of love. May you know and receive that love, love that I am offering, love that you offer each other.

See you in church!

peace, love and blessings,

Rev. Seth

Blessing and Blessings

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

among the most detailed and extensive. [Women are exempt from most of these out of concern that doing so would be a burden when added to their child-care responsibilities.] Among the ritual blessings incumbent upon Jewish men are those upon awakening in the morning and going to bed at night, a cycle of blessings that accompanies donning the tzitzit (prayer shawl) and tefillin (leather boxes that attach to arm and head and contain scrolls) for daily prayer, blessings before, during and after meal with specific ones for certain foods, an entire cycle of holiday blessings, again among others. The rationale for the ritual is clear when we note that each blessing begins with begins "Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe..."

Many traditions, including our own, encourage pausing for a moment to bless a meal before we eat it, including the myriad of people who helped get the food to us and the bounty of the natural world that provides it. The Muslim fast of Ramadan blesses the act of eating. Jesus' Beatitudes, a scripture beloved by many Christians, lifts up the holiness inherent in the lives and actions of people.

Buddhist social activist and teacher Thich Nhat Hanh, whom I consider among my mentors, encourages the use of gathas, short verses which remind us to pay attention, to be awake in the present moment, to really be "in" whatever we are doing. One of my favorites, said when washing dishes:

Washing the dishes

Is like bathing a baby Buddha.

The profane is the sacred.

Everyday mind is Buddha's mind.

I don't always recite a formal gatha, but it's an important practice for me to pause amidst my daily mundane tasks and remind myself to be present to the warmth of towels fresh out of the clothes dryer, the luxurious feel of warm water on my hands and the privilege of having clean, safe water at the turn of the tap, or the warmth, color, fragrance and taste of a cup of tea.

So where does this leave us, or me at least? What's this "blessing" thing about? "Blessing" doesn't confer holiness or sacredness. Although blessing does not make something holy, it is more than just remembering; it is an intentional

acknowledgement that the holy is lurking within the most mundane of daily activities and events.

I will refrain from commenting on whether our offering a blessing invokes the holy and/or its presence. Or on whether there is in fact a presence to be invoked. Doing so, it seems to me, does invoke OUR being present, our openness to whatever might be there. We bless something with our awareness (Soul Matters). Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung was described in his 1961 *New York Times* obituary as an "adventurer in the mind." He was as well one of the sons of an evangelical Lutheran pastor, and much of his adventuring around the mind happened at the intersection of religion and psychology. Over the door of Jung's Kuessnacht home on the shore of Lake Lucerne in Switzerland is carved the Latin the inscription: *Vocatus atqua non vocatus deus aderit* (Called or not called, God is present).

Whatever/whomever it is that is "out there"—be it a deity, a force, an unknown, or in the delightful words of one of our youth at our Coming of Age ceremony recently, an all-knowing chipmunk—does not appear because we have spoken a blessing. But we are changed by doing so.

When we light a chalice at the beginning of worship or at an "ordinary" committee meeting to do the nitty-gritty work of the church, we recognize the presence of the holy and summon our own being present to that dimension. A chaplain at Ball hospital is one among many hospital chaplains who annually offer a "blessing of hands" to the nursing staff. Doing so recognizes that the work of healing that they do is indeed holy work. As a chaplain, I have blessed ill people, hospital staffers, the bodies of people following death, including on more than one occasion, babies who died before or during birth. It was always an intensely meaningful experience, as much for me as for the person or family. When we offer a blessing for a child, a marriage, a death, we acknowledge the holiness of the cycle of life and of relationships.

Whatever it is that we experience as holy lurks within the everyday. Blessing asks us to be aware of that presence and to acknowledge it.

May your life be blessed!

Rev. Julia

Gratitude

Thank you everyone at UUCM!

~Intern Minister Joel

Thank you to Coming of Age youth for so bravely and wonderfully sharing your faith statements with us as the culmination of your

Coming of Age program. Thank you mentors and teachers, for offering your wisdom and guidance to our youth on their journey this year. Thank you to **Nadine, Elizabeth** and **Joel** for hard work and support of the program. Thank you parents, for all you did to help make the program so successful. ~Rev. Seth

Tremendous gratitude and appreciation to **Holly Hanauer, Sharon Seager** and **Anna Dillinger** for their diligent and highly committed work serving on Board of Trustees, Holly for the past three years as President-Elect/President/Past-President, Sharon for two years as the Board Secretary, and Anna this past year as the Youth Representative. You all have given so much to our community – thank you for your leadership and service.

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."

Splinters from the Board

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Speaking of taking risks, Seth's letter responding to the Listening Session report displayed contrition, humility, and a desire to make amends. Based on our discussions and my observations over a long time, I believe that Seth is truly reaching toward humility, which a very wise man once defined as "a clear recognition of what and who we really are, followed by a sincere attempt to become what we could be." I don't think he is all the way there, but I don't think anyone is.

I believe that Seth shows that merely human love that I spoke of toward us and toward our church. I believe that we are on our way to becoming a humble church, a church that clearly recognizes what and who we really are, and makes a sincere attempt to become what we could be. We are blessed with wonderful members, beautiful music, loving friendships, passion for justice, compassion for each other and those in our community who need it (and who doesn't?), and a pretty good minister who is getting better. The blessings we have here are limited only by our fears.

As I said at the Congregational Meeting, I find our work together—the work of the members and friends, the ministers and staff, the board and the committees—to be a work of love and joy. Thanks again for letting me help.

Jerry McKean, president



Adult Discussion Group Every Sunday, 9:30 am Red room

June 3 – *Climate Deniers*

Why do so many people deny the existence of human caused climate change, in spite of overwhelming scientific evidence and consensus in support of the idea? What can be done to persuade our fellow travelers on spaceship Earth of the reality of the problem? Join us on Sunday when **Dave LeBlanc**, drawing on material from an online course explaining the science of global change and why certain types of people steadfastly refuse to believe it.

June 10 – *The Web of Life*

William Miller will lead the discussion on the web of life, especially as animals maintain the circle of life.

June 17 – TBA

June 24 – *Is Going Green Enough?*

The seventh principle of UU beliefs reads, "Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part." How green does a UU need to be to be faithful to our seventh principle? What are the metrics of "greenness?" Join us on Sunday morning as **John Taylor** leads a conversation on the paradoxes of being liberal, modern and green.

June 2018 UUCM Calendar

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



Regular Weekly Events

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

June Events & Activities

Youth Group End-of-Year Party at the Carrier-Ladd Home	Friday	June 1	5:00 pm
Visitors Q&A	Sunday	June 3	Noon
Adult RE: Shared Pulpit	Sunday	June 3	12:15 pm
Youth Service Journey		June 4-9	
Adult RE: Credo-Writing	Monday	June 4	6:30 pm
Social Justice Committee	Monday	June 4	7:30 pm
Worship Associates	Wednesday	June 6	7:30 pm
Film Screening: <i>An Inconvenient Sequel</i>	Thursday	June 7	7:00 pm
Chalice Marketplace	Sunday	June 10	10:15 & noon
Roots & Wings :: New Member Class	Sunday	June 10	12:15 pm
Boston Bound Bake Sale	Sunday	June 10	Noon
Boston Bound Soup Lunch (fundraiser)	Sunday	June 10	Noon
Suggestion Session	Sunday	June 10	12:30 pm
Board of Trustees	Wednesday	June 13	6:30 pm
Youth Group at Moonlight Movies	Saturday	June 16	6:00 pm
New Member Signing Ceremony	Sunday	June 17	10:15 am
Adult Discussion Committee	Sunday	June 17	12:15 pm
Unigram Submission Deadline	Wednesday	June 20	9:00 am
Program Council	Wednesday	June 20	
Committee on Ministries	Thursday	June 21	7:15 pm
Pastoral Associates Training Retreat	Saturday	June 23	1:00 pm
Youth Group Hiking at Mounds Park	Thursday	June 28	10:00 am
Membership Committee	Thursday	June 28	1:00 pm

Suggestion Session

The Committee on Ministries and the Board of Trustees will host a Suggestion Session on Sunday, June 10, at 12:30 in the Sanctuary. The purpose of this session is to build on the results of the Listening Sessions and begin the process of moving from where we are to where we want to be. We hope to energize this process by:

- Reviewing the suggestions we received in the Listening Sessions.
- Reviewing the responses to those suggestions by the Board and the Minister.
- Soliciting and recording additional suggestions.

Like the Listening Sessions, the Suggestion Session will involve breakouts into smaller groups to maximize participation. To provide greater accountability and transparency, participants and their suggestions will be identified so that the Board, Minister, or relevant committee can engage directly with the member or friend making the suggestion. Rev. Seth will attend the session and be available to work with members or friends who have suggestions for him.

We hope that you can come and bring your suggestions with you. Even if you do not have specific suggestions in mind, your participation will help to move the church forward.

Church Office Summer Schedule

Monday 1:00 – 4:00 pm

Tuesday 9:00 am – 2:00 pm

Wednesday & Thursday 9:00 am – 4:00 pm

Please note that the office will be closed on Fridays beginning June 8

UUCM Staff & Leadership

Rev. Seth Carrier-Ladd, Minister
seth@uuchurchmuncie.org

Rev. Julia Corbett-Hemeyer, Community Minister
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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
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Rev. Elizabeth Carrier-Ladd, Coordinator of Youth Programs
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Board of Trustees

Jerry McKean
President

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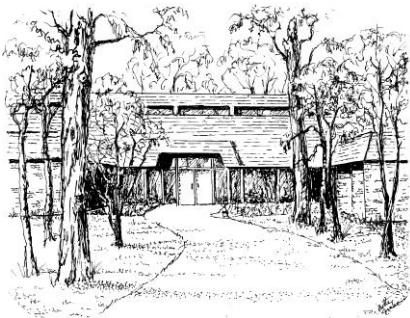
Anna Dillinger
Youth Representative

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 – Thursday 9:00 am – 4:00 pm

Unitarian Universalist Church of Muncie

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