

The Fellowship Focus

Monthly Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Elkhart

March 2024



The Stewardship Committee opened the Pledge drive season with a thoughtful and inspiring service on Sunday February 25 with personal messages from members Jim Barnes, Annette Long, Laura Snow, and Pam Wycliff. The recording is available to view on YouTube>UU Elkhart>Stewardship Sunday.

Pledge packets are available on Ivy Island in the vestibule, in addressed envelopes for signed members with additional copies for associate members who are able to contribute. Responses are requested by March 17.

This season invites us to reflect on the value of the Fellowship in our lives. Coming together we receive support and encouragement in our personal joys and sorrows and share gifts of time, talent, and treasure to benefit others. These pages contain many opportunities to explore which activities call to you. Please participate when you can, and share your thoughts on the offerings with others so we may adapt and grow together.

The following responsive reading was used in the February 25 service. It is written by Julián Jamaica Soto and can be found on [uua.org](http://uua.org/worship)>worship web:

Celebrating Abundance

All that we are, together and individually, is part of the abundance of the universe.

We are made of stars. We are made of earth.

All that we have comes from earth, from the labor of those in our communities

...from the cities, farms, and oceans that enliven us. The world, and those who live in it.

We are surrounded by blessing, by grace, and by possibilities.

We are reflected in every other human being.

We respect and honor one another's differences.

We celebrate our interbeing with abundance and the practice of generosity.

Come, let us worship together.



Submitted by your editor, Katrina Konopinski.

Send information and suggestions for future issues to katksirx@gmail.com

Sundays at UUFE

1st Sunday, 3/3/24, 10 am: Pastor Mariah Martin, Mental Health and ADHD

For this first Sunday in March, Pastor Mariah Martin will return to our pulpit and speak on the topic of mental health and ADHD.

2nd Sunday, 3/10/24, 10 am: April Lidinsky, "Small Steps and Sea Changes"

April Lidinsky returns to our pulpit! Her service message will be focused on her involvement with the One Small Step program, which brings two people together with different backgrounds and positions on issues and provides an opportunity for them to learn who they are as people.

3rd Sunday, 3/17/24, 10 am: Rev. Izzy Harbin, "The Process of Becoming"

The Rev. Izzy Harbin will return as our speaker for 10 am on Sunday, March 17th, with a service entitled, "The Process of Becoming." Rev. Izzy will expand upon the concepts of quantum mechanics, a VERY different idea of a Creator, and why there is evil in the world. We will share Joys and Sorrows, and afterwards will be our monthly potluck in the Gathering Place. Please bring a dish, but don't worry, if you forget, there will be plenty!

4th Sunday, 3/24/24, 10 am: Lorna Lane and Laura Snow, "Ostara"

Laura Snow and Lorna Lane of our CUUPS group will lead a service focused on Ostara. We will have 4th Sunday candle sharing.

5th Sunday, 3/31/24, 10 am: Rev. Dr. Jimmy Clifton, "Coming Out Of the Darkness"

For our Easter Sunday service, the Rev. Dr. Jimmy Clifton will speak on a message entitled, "Coming Out Of The Darkness."

Except on potluck 3rd Sundays, after each service, we will continue community time with conversation in the Gathering Place, enjoying coffee, tea, and refreshments provided by volunteers. A Meditation program begins most of these weeks at 11:45.

1st Sunday, 4/7/24, 10 am: Steve Cripe, "Faith, Hope, and Dietrich Bonhoeffer"

Steve Cripe, a member of our Worship committee, will deliver a message written by the Rev. Dennis McCarty, minister emeritus of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Columbus, Indiana. This is the story of a man standing up for his faith and principles in the face of Nazi government threats and death.

UU Art Gallery

Our Gallery now features Mary Perron's personal collection through May '24. It is an eclectic show, fun to browse through looking for artists you may know.

For information on the displays or having your own collection featured, contact one of the committee members: Carolyne Andersohn, Carolee Searles, and Emily Morison.

UUFEE Care Team*

The UUFEE Community is served by our Care Team during times of injury, illness, loss, and other personal needs. To request assistance, call UUFEE 574-264-6525 or coordinator, Mary Adams, 619-921-0613. Other team members are Jim Todd and Mary Perron.

The Care Team has two vacancies which need to be filled. Responsibilities largely consist of visits with our UUFEE family in person, by phone or email. Anyone willing to consider serving is asked to contact Mary Adams at createnjoy@yahoo.com or 619-921-0613 to discuss this. Those who have left are already carrying responsibilities on other committees or boards. UUFEE greatly appreciates the prior service of Dwight Fish, Peg Cook, Steve Cripe, and Karen Cripe. *contains edits made after mailing

UU Feasters

Feasters will meet at 11:30am on Wednesday, March 27 at Brislo, 1500 Osolo Rd., Elkhart. Let Mary Adams know that you can come so that she can reserve adequate space for us. Contact her at 619-921-0613 or createnjoy@yahoo.com.

UU Feasters is a social outing for those interested in sharing a monthly luncheon together. Please consider coming and having a wonderful social time with others from our Fellowship.

Meditation

Meditation group will meet on Sundays March 3, 10, 24, and 31 at 11:45 am in the RE classroom. We take a break on March 17 to enjoy the Potluck meal together. Generally, we discuss our meditation practices together followed by a guided meditation. The sessions usually last about an hour. There is no charge for this program, and all are welcome.

YOGA at UUFEE

We are pleased to have Kristen Smith-Myers as our yoga teacher. She will be with us on most Thursday evenings beginning at 6pm in the Gathering Place.

Science and Society

We will suspend the Science and Society programs for March. If anyone would like to start an alternative program, such as a forum discussion (or other program), please contact Ken Clayborn.

Blessing Bags Donation Request

The next Blessing Bag distribution will be Thursday, March 28 - the day before Good Friday. We will need all items for the Lutheran Church at UUFE by Sunday, March 24. This is a little sooner than I expected but hopefully we can still have a good response. Requested items for donation include pocket tissues, TP, toiletries, readers, clothing, footwear, and shelf-stable convenience foods. The full list is posted on the tubs in the Gathering Place and copies are available on Ivy Island. Thank you in advance for your participation in this worthwhile project. Steve Cripe, Social Justice Committee

UUFE Grocery Assistance Pantry

Thanks to the generosity of all. Please help out in the future by adding a few extra shelf stable items to your cart the next time you shop. We need things like breakfast cereal, pancake or baking mix, canned vegetables and fruit, canned meat, instant potatoes, and canned chicken and beef.

You may submit a reimbursement request to shop using donations already made to the fund. There are also \$50 gift cards to take shopping if you prefer. You may also make a monetary donation. Contact Ken Clayborn for more information.

Worship Committee Summary, from Chuck Bower, committee chair

Our Worship committee met on February 11th to have a planning meeting and prepare more extensively for 2024. Suffice to say, we have many outstanding special speakers and guest ministers. There are always interesting perspectives on how we might change and improve services. We will be planning to continue some long-held traditions like Mother's Day, Flower Communion, Father's Day, Water Communion, and our special Christmas Eve services. And for 2024, some of our speakers from 2022 and 2023 will be returning. We have lots of ideas and plans for this year, and can't wait to share them each Sunday!

We continue to broadcast services via Zoom and YouTube, believing that our messages and faith are worthwhile for the greater community. Zoom attendance may appear low, but since the beginning of November, we have had over 350 total views of Sunday services on YouTube. This proves people are paying attention to our Sunday morning activities. While it might make sense to eliminate Zoom, it is the current platform for recording services for YouTube. The tech system that we use for Zoom is also the platform for playing our pianist's (Lizzie French) recordings for our hymns on most Sundays, as well as play other music and videos via our TV screen, Zoom, and YouTube. Could we play music and record to YouTube without Zoom? Yes, but our current process seems to work well for us.

Thanks to our hard working committee members: Joan Clayborn, Laura Show, Lorna Lane, Genee Crump, and Steve Cripe.

February Board Summary, from Pam Wycliff, President

As I write this it looks like Spring! Our Board discussed many activities this month:

- We are closer to selecting new congregational business software. We will have a selection to try out by next month.
- Committee descriptions are completed and formatted. A master book will be placed in the office. Special thank you to Laura Snow and all committees for their work in creating their committee descriptions.
- Social Justice Committee has approved and is arranging for Jim Scott to perform in concert at UUFE on Saturday, April 13, 2024 at 5:30 PM. More promotional information will follow soon. Please pass this along as it can be a good fundraiser for UUFE as well as great fun!
- Each of the Board members told what they hope we can accomplish in the remaining 6 months of this church year:
 - A broad-based social media outreach
 - Check our summer retreat and make sure all goals were completed
 - CUUPS remain 5 members strong after Lorna and Randy move to Ft. Wayne
 - New UUFE T-Shirts
 - Increased membership perhaps through social get togethers
 - More fundraiser events
 - More member/friends social events
 - Initiating Chalice Circles
 - Expansion of the Memorial Garden to include the woods to our north.
- If anyone has ideas of what they want us to accomplish yet this year, please write it on the white board in the Gathering Place.
- Another Social Justice item: Pam signed us up for UUFE to participate in UU the Vote so we can become a Good Trouble Congregation. Social Justice Committee will discuss and figure out how we can accomplish this.

Finance Committee Summary, from Ken Clayborn, Treasurer

1. We had an extra expense in February. In 2022 when we rebuilt the parking lot, we installed fencing along the north and south borders to comply with city requirements to prevent headlights from disturbing the neighbors. The north section of fence, on the west end, was shorter than originally planned because of miscommunication among the workers with the contractors. We had two additional panels installed in February to remediate the problem. This was done by Bender and Sons. The cost was \$850.00.
2. We are working on an additional project. This project, spearheaded by our Board President Pam Wycliff, proposes to consolidate, as much as possible, the needs of the various committees into a common computer software suite. At the February Board meeting the group requested that an evaluation be done by an outside consultant, to see which alternative best meets the needs of the various committees. We are just beginning the process so there is no way to calculate the cost yet, but we do not expect that it will be significant.
3. All payments are current. There are no outstanding obligations.

Registration for Chalice Sparx Family Camp & Retreat Now Open

Registration for this summer's Chalice Sparx Family Camp & Retreat for Unitarian Universalist families is now open. Join us July 4-7, 2024 for an amazing all ages experience at lovely Camp Friedenswald in Cassopolis, Michigan.

At Chalice Sparx camp and retreat for families you will experience a truly multigenerational community. There are no camp counselors here to whisk away the children separate from their families. Here we learn together, worship together and explore together in a community of all ages – including elders who complete our multigenerational village. As an intentional UU covenanted community, we are especially welcoming to Trans children, youth, and their families.

We also have fun together. Swimming, hiking or riding a wagon through the trails, canoeing, archery, popcorn popped in a kettle over an open fire, and of course, S'mores and singing camp songs.

Check out the website of our non-profit organization run by Unitarian Universalist religious educators, ministers, and lay persons from all over the Midwest: www.chalicesparx.org. Like us on facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/chalicesparx/>

MidAmerica Regional Assembly

This annual meeting will be held both online and at the First Unitarian Society of Madison, Wisconsin, on Friday, April 19, 2024, and Saturday, April 20, 2024.

Registration for Regional Assembly closes on Friday, April 12 at 5 pm Central, 6 pm Eastern. All delegates must be credentialed online by their congregation no later than 5 pm Central, 6 pm Eastern on Monday, April 15. Delegates must also register separately to attend the Regional Assembly. For more information go to <https://www.uua.org/midamerica/ra>

Helping Your Neighbors: ESL Teachers Needed

Some churches in Elkhart are again organizing English as a Second (ESL) classes for adults. Volunteer teachers are needed for the next session of classes, March 4 -May 23, 2024, meeting at Prairie Street Mennonite Church. Sessions are on Tuesday and Thursday evening 6:30-8:00pm. Volunteering once or twice a week is your choice. Materials are provided. You do not need to be a trained teacher. If desired, you may start as an assistant-in-training working with a veteran teacher. You do not need to be able to speak Spanish.

Substitutes are available for illness and vacations. Please contact Sueann VonGunten, vonalter2@gmail.com or 574-612-3108 with your interest or questions. Approximately 20 teachers are needed to teach all of the classes. If you have friends who might be interested encourage them to call or write. Please consider helping your neighbors learn English.

March 2024

Birthdays

sun	mon	tue	wed	thu	fri	sat
					1	2 <i>Judy Darnel</i>
3 10am Service Coffee Hr 11:45am Meditation	4	5	6 5pm Membership	7 6pm Yoga	8	9
10 10am Service Coffee Hr 11:45am Meditation	11	12 7pm Worship & Arts	13 6:30pm Board	14 <i>Peter Carney</i> 6pm Yoga	15	16 <i>Ray Enfield</i>
17 10am Service Potluck	18	19 <i>Darlene Edy</i>	20	21 <i>Renee Ruocco</i> 6pm Yoga	22 <i>Annette Long</i>	23 TOMORROW is the last day to bring Blessing Bag items
24 <i>ShaTeisa Davis</i> 10am Service Coffee Hr 11:45am Meditation	25 <i>Pat Weigold</i> FOCUS INFO DUE	26 <i>Art Beutler</i>	27 11:30am Feasters	28 6pm Yoga	29	30 <i>Georgiann James</i>
31 EASTER 10am Service Coffee Hr 11:45am Meditation						



***The Year
To Save
The Earth***

***A Musical and
Multimedia
Experience by
Composer Jim Scott***

*Jim's lyrical songs of ecology are
illustrated by beautiful
and striking projected images*

5:30 pm - Saturday April 13

*Admission \$15 advance
\$20 at the door*

**Unitarian Universalist
Fellowship of Elkhart
1732 Garden St. Elkhart, IN 46514**

UUFE.org

Soft drinks and snacks will be available for purchase at the event.

UUFE
1732 Garden St
Elkhart, IN 46514