

The Fellowship Focus

Monthly Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Elkhart July 2024

Save the Date! New UU Membership Classes Coming in September

Interested in learning more about Unitarian Universalism and UU Fellowship of Elkhart? Would you like to get to know other people who are exploring membership in our fellowship? If so, please plan to attend our upcoming membership classes. The Membership Committee will be holding New UU classes on two consecutive Saturdays in September. We will be meeting on the 14th and 21st from 10 am to noon. If you cannot make it in person, we are planning to hold the class in a hybrid Zoom/in-person format.

To sign up, please contact Membership Chair, Annette Long, via email: InquisitiveOne23@yahoo.com or text: 574-294-3227

We'd love to have you join us!

Sunday Meditation, from Ken Clayborn

In July the meditation group will meet on two Sundays only due to vacations and potluck on July 21. Sunday July 7 and Sunday July 14 we will meet at 11:45 am, in the RE classroom. We have a congregational potluck on July 21 so we will take that day off to enjoy the meal together.

Generally during the meditation group session, we discuss our meditation practices together followed by a short, guided meditation. These sessions usually last about an hour. There is no charge for this program, and all are welcome.

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Editor: Katrina Konopinski

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

Sundays at UUFE

1st Sunday, July 7 – 10:00 AM “Forgiveness” , Susie Holszuh

Steve Cripe will be Worship Associate - Susie is a member of our Fellowship and previously has spoken. She is going to speak on Forgiveness and taking responsibility for personal, mental, emotional, and physical care around unforgiveness and forgiving. We look forward to her message. Enjoy refreshments during fellowship hour afterwards. Meditation group to follow at 11:45 AM

2nd Sunday, July 14 – 10:00 AM “Rabbit Holes”, Laura Snow

Lorna Lane will be Worship Associate - Come and be surprised at where she is going with this topic. Laura is always informative, intellectual, witty and delightful when speaking to our fellowship. Enjoy refreshments during fellowship hour afterwards. Meditation group to follow at 11:45 AM

3rd Sunday, July 21 – 10:00 AM “Revealing Who We Are”, Rev. Izzy Hardin

Genee Crump will be Worship Associate – Rev. Izzy is amazing and always inspiring. Join her following from her Fellowship for potluck following the service. We will have Joys & Sorrow during the service led by Genee.

4th Sunday, July 28 – 10:00 AM “Flames of Faith”, Rev. Mariah Martin

Steve Cripe will be Worship Associate – Come and feel the warmth and sensitivity Mariah will apply to this Old Testament message for our Fellowship. Marva Netherland will contribute plenty of heat from the piano also. We will have the 4th Sunday Candle hosted by Genee Crump during worship. Enjoy refreshments during fellowship hour afterwards.

1st Sunday, August 4 – 10:00 AM Rev. Carolyn Hunt

Joan Clayborn will be Worship Associate - Carolyn is still working on a title for her message but you can be assured you won't be disappointed from one of our favorite guest speakers. Join us for fellowship hour afterwards. Meditation group to follow at 11:45 AM.

YOGA at UUFE

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.

Worship and Arts, from Joan Clayborn

At our monthly meeting on June 12 it was with heavy hearts that we said “so long” to our fantastic chairman, Chuck Bower. He has been an effective, cheerful, unselfish, and helpful leader, and he will definitely be missed.

Since it would be difficult to replace him with just one person, the committee has taken a 3-pronged approach to try to cover the many tasks Chuck performed; the 3 people are Joan Clayborn, Steve Cripe, and Genee Crump. Steve has generously agreed to act as the contact person for the committee.

At this meeting we also had to say goodbye to Lorna Lane and Laura Snow. Lorna has written excellent meeting minutes each month for a number of years. Lorna and Laura both have been valuable members of the W&A team contacting potential outside speakers, performing Worship Associate duties on a regular basis, and each of them have occasionally provided the congregation with interesting Sunday service messages that they prepared and presented themselves.

As these members of the committee are moving on, we are also fortunate to welcome two new committee members. We certainly look forward to Susie Holzshuh and Shari Mellin becoming active members of what we hope continues to be a strong Worship and Arts committee serving our beloved UUF community.

Social Justice Committee, from Steve Cripe

The Social Justice Committee continues to post a position at the Elkhart Farmer’s Market on Saturday mornings to register voters. Four couples (Steve & Karen Cripe, Ken Clayborn and TJ Shaum, Ron & Linda Gill, and Dwight and Oxana) have split up the weekends through September to make ourselves available. We are registering low numbers but have great conversations with visitors to our booth including the Mayor who spent considerable time with us on June 15.

We will be getting the word out soon about anyone interested in helping us write notes, postcards, letters, etc., for the current election cycle in progress. Pam Wycliff will head this up and gather us together with the necessary tools to “get the word out”. Some in the Fellowship have already indicated their willingness to help the SJ Committee do this.

The Blessing Bags are growing every time out. The next distribution will be Thursday, June 27 and we will have the best clothing display yet. We cannot thank UUF enough for your generosity and support. A few very generous cash contributions from individual families, combined with your regular items contributed, and the thoughtfulness of some to call and ask specifically what we can use really helps make this a success and true blessing for the recipients.

Science and Society, from Ken Clayborn

As a little bit of a “heads up” we plan to renew the Science and Society program, beginning in August. We will start with the first two sessions of the recent 6 part PBS program “A Brief History of the Future” presented by futurist Ari Wallach. We will go back to the original time from last year. Presentations will be at 2:00 PM in the gathering place on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month. So, the August dates will be Tuesday August 13 and Tuesday August 27. Here is a synopsis of the first two programs:

A Brief History of The Future

Episode 1: Beyond the Now - August 13, 2 PM in the Gathering Place

- The series widens our perspective of time beyond our lifetimes and joins Ari Wallach as he embarks on a journey to seek the individuals and ideas that can shape a better, more sustainable future that each generation can build upon.

Episode 2: Chaos and Complexity - August 27, 2 PM in the Gathering Place

- How do we make sense of today’s exponential rate of change and disruption?

Finance Committee Summary, from Ken Clayborn, Treasurer

The Fiscal year for 2023-2024 ended on June 30, 2024. The 2024-2025 fiscal year began on July 1, 2024. All of you out there who have been faithful donors will receive your pledge summaries within the first two weeks of July. These are actually mid-calendar year summaries so they are not useful for tax filings, but they will give you a warm feeling knowing that you have fulfilled your pledges!

We look forward to having Rev. Dan Miyake begin his tenure here at Uufe in mid-August. Currently we are working with him and the Clarklake Michigan congregation to make sure all goes smoothly. Clarklake is the other congregation that Rev. Miyake serves half time. Preparations are underway to complete a living space for Rev. Miyake in the learning center which he may use periodically during his longer visits. TJ Shaum and Linda Becker are coordinating that effort.

We signed a contract with Indiana Farm Bureau Insurance to become our new facility insurer. Dwight Fish, William Becker, and Ken Clayborn evaluated two separate proposals. One from Indiana Farm Bureau and one from Travelers. We opted for the more reasonably priced, locally managed Farm Bureau quote. We received word from the UUA that we were certainly not the only church to receive cancellation notices from Church Mutual; hundreds of churches of all denominations were also canceled. UUA even sent out a questionnaire to all UU congregations seeking input so that they could judge the impact nationwide. We made our thoughts known. We ended up paying about \$1800.00 more per year for an equivalent policy with a slightly higher deductible. The new policy will go into effect July 1, 2024. It should be noted that insurance companies nationwide are struggling.

All payments are current. There are no outstanding obligations. The most current financial figures are always posted on the bulletin board beside the office door.

UUFE Board Notes June 12, 2024 for FOCUS

1. We have hired Rev. Dan Miyake as our half-time, contract minister who will start on August 16, 2024. We are "sharing" him with Clarklake, MI UU church.
2. Safety and Security update report:
 - a. Remove "no gun" signs from doors as it tells a possible shooter that no one inside would have a gun.
 - b. We need AED
 - c. We need Trauma first aid kit and some folks who are trained to use it
 - d. Some kind of security system with cameras
 - e. Decided a task force will be formed with new Board leadership in July to review and prioritize report items.
3. As Church Mutual did not pick us up for next year, Ken and Dwight did walk through with two different Insurance companies. It was recommended and the Board approved to have Farm Bureau be our insurance provider. That contract will begin July 1, 2024. *Contract signed with Farm Bureau
4. Tee-Shirts will be delivered mid to late next week. * Tee-shirts are here and are at church - both orchid and white, all adult sizes. If you pre-purchased your shirts are packaged and if you have not purchased you may buy one or many for \$15.00 each. They really are very pretty and have the new UUA logo on the front.
5. Vote for the two bylaw changes at potluck on June 16, 2024, if quorum present.
 - a. 4.2.2 Voting at any and all congregational meetings is limited to those members who have been members for at least 30 60 calendar days prior to the meeting. It was brought up that we didn't post the bylaw change the number of days prior to the vote so it must be brought up again at another congregational meeting.
 - b. 7.4 Standing Committee
 - 1) 7.4.3 To participate as a member of any committee one must live within Michiana and be actively involved in the life of UUFE *This bylaws change was NOT approved but the congregation.
6. Marketing ideas from Dan Watson were discussed briefly the it was decided it would be best to wait until July for change in leadership then to have a task force to look at each suggestion and determine what might be possible for UUFE

This is my last Board update and I want to thank everyone for making this an enjoyable, productive year. Your love, patience and support carried UUFE (and me) through the year. I feel blessed.

In peace,
Pam Wycliff

General Assembly 2024 Final Report

Laura Snow and I had the honor and privilege of representing UUFE as delegates to the General Assembly, and we wished to provide this report on the business that was decided by 2,700-plus delegates from all 50 states and multiple countries, representing more than 700 congregations.

Most significantly, the revision to Article II of the Unitarian Universalist Association's bylaws were approved with 80 percent of delegates voting in favor (a two-thirds vote was required for passage). The final version included one amendment approved by delegates. Three other proposed amendments did not receive enough votes for approval.

[You can read the final version of Article II here.](#)

For those wondering what now, I wanted to note that this change to the bylaws affects the UUA and its members, which include congregations and affiliated organizations. The change does not affect congregational polity or congregations' relationship to the UUA. However, I would expect future programming and initiatives to reflect Article II.

Other business of the General Assembly included:

- Discussion and ultimate approval of UUA Business Resolution: Embracing Transgender, Nonbinary and Intersex People is a Fundamental Expression of UU Religious Values
- Discussion and ultimate approval of three Actions of Immediate Witness:
 - World on Fire: Humanitarian Work and Climate Change
 - Solidarity with Palestinians
 - Centering Love Amidst the Ongoing Impact of COVID-19
- Discussion and ultimate approval of a responsive resolution, UUA General Assembly Support for October 7 Hostages

[You can find more details on all of the above matters on this page.](#)

As I mentioned to some, the discussions were spirited and at times crossed the line, particularly during the debate on the business resolution and matters related to the ongoing conflict in Gaza. While it was uncomfortable and painful for many, I am heartened by how our inclusive democratic process responded to the situation. I give credit to the moderation team, chaplains, process observers and other behind-the-scenes staff and volunteers for love, care and sensitivity.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.


— *Terry T. Mark*

“final version” at <https://discuss.uua.org/t/amended-final-proposed-revision-to-article-ii-as-completed-by-the-article-ii-study-commission-in-october-2023/1457>

“more details” at <https://www.uua.org/ga/off-site/2024/business>

July 2024

Birthdays

sun	mon	tue	wed	thu	fri	sat
	1	2	3 6pm Membership	4  Enjoy the fireworks	5	6
7 10am Service Coffee Hr 11:45am Meditation	8	9 7pm Worship & Arts	10 6:30pm Board	11 6pm Yoga	12	13
14 10am Service Coffee Hr 11:45am Meditation	15	16	17	18 6pm Yoga	19	20
21 <i>Laurie Tweddale</i> 10am Service Potluck	22	23	24	25 6pm Yoga FOCUS INFO DUE	26	27 <i>Norman Anderson</i>
28 <i>Gene Wiswell</i> 10am Service Coffee Hr 11:45am Meditation	29 <i>Charles Brugh</i>	30	31 <i>Karen Cripe</i>			

UUFE
1732 Garden St
Elkhart, IN 46514