



The Candle Flame



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Midland

A liberal religious haven that cherishes the exploring mind and welcomes all souls

Phone (989) 631-1162

6220 Jefferson Avenue, Midland

www.uufom.org

March 2017 (Volume LXIX No. 3)

Sunday Morning Services at 10:30 AM

Pastoral Care

Contact

Gisela Bailey
(989) 835-2029

*"She was warned.
She was given an
explanation.
Nevertheless, she
persisted."*

- Mitch McConnell

Look for us on
[Facebook!](#)

Office Hours:

To leave a message for the Fellowship or staff, please email uufom@uufom.org

Rev. Jeff's Hours:

Mon. & Sat. by appointment only.
Tues. & Thurs.
12:00-5:00 p.m.
Wed. 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
Sun. 8:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

DRE Hours:

Tues. & Thurs. 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
Mon., Fri., Sat. by appt.

To make an appointment, please email Rev. Jeff directly at uurevjeff@gmail.com

March 5

"Spiritual Materialism"

Rev. Jeff Liebmann

American society places great emphasis on competition. We score, rank, and tally wins and losses in nearly every aspect of life. But this framework serves us poorly in matters of the spirit and how we view ourselves as persons of inherent worth and dignity.

March 12

"The Rights of Animals"

Dr. Jesse Donahue

We are on the precipice of momentous legal changes for animals. Companion animals are gaining rights to public representation in government, access to housing, inheritance, and increased protection through the criminal justice system. Professor Donahue, Chair of the Political Science Department at SVSU, and co-author of three books and many articles on the politics of zoos, will speak to us about how zoo animals can benefit from a global legal revolution in which animals are gaining personhood and citizenship rights.

March 19

"Making Adjustments"

Rev. Jeff Liebmann

Football fans know the importance of the early third quarter – what halftime adjustments did each team make and will the strategies work? We are entering the second half in the struggle for LGBTQIA equality and rights. Can we make the necessary adjustments to keep the momentum moving forward? This is the third service on strategic planning directions adopted by the Fellowship last fall.

March 26

Founder's Day – "Sign of the Times" Rev. Jeff Liebmann

During the history of this Fellowship, the United States has invaded 29 different nations – several of them multiple times. What will it take for our children to see that number stop climbing?

Today we will install and dedicate our new Peace Pole at the entrance to the Fellowship.

Pastoral Care

Pastoral Care Contact for March: Gisela Bailey (989) 835-2029

Pastoral Care Ministry Team

New to our Fellowship? Just discovered that you might need more help with an issue than you had counted on? Our Pastoral Care Ministry Team is here for you. We can provide a meal, a ride, some respite or a supportive ear and a cup of coffee. Don't be shy – we are a covenant family!

From the Board President

The Board met on Thursday, February 16 at 7:00 PM. In attendance were Rev. Jeff, Charlie Enright, Jill Haver-Crissman, Janelle Dombeck and Robert Malecki. This constituted quorum. Special thanks to Michaele Malecki for recording the minutes in the absence of Board Secretary, John Kinkema.

Janelle Dombeck, who has graciously agreed to perform Treasurer duties until a new treasurer is named, reported that pledges have been coming in and that we have started the year on sound financial footing.

Members of the Nominating Committee have been actively searching for people fill the vacant Board positions of President-Elect and Treasurer but have not been successful. These are important roles, and I would like to encourage members to consider serving the Fellowship by filling one of these positions.

Rev. Jeff reported that we have a new accompanist who has taken the position on a volunteer basis. She is not able to accompany the choir during Wednesday practices, but will play some of the Sunday music selections.

Also discussed was the need for a monthly Membership Report to the Board. Hopefully this will appear in next month's summary.

The Board also voted to change the monthly meetings from the current third Thursday of every month to the fourth Tuesday. Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, March 28.

The highlight of the meeting was Tim Wagner's informative and professional presentation of the Parking Lot Pavement and Drainage Project. I'm very excited about this project as it will be great to have a safe and improved parking lot for our members and visitors. The estimated cost is \$75,000. The Endowment Committee is funding \$20,000 (\$5,000/yr. has been set aside over the last 4 years) and some members have donated an additional \$30,000. There is \$25,000 currently unfunded. This important project will have lasting value and will benefit every member of the Fellowship. Anyone who would like to contribute to this enterprise can contact me or Tim Wagner, Chair of Building and Grounds Committee.

I hope everyone has a great month. Spring is on the way! I'll see you at the Fellowship.

Speed Malecki
Board President

Pulpit Ponderings



Many Unitarian Universalists dread the inevitable conversations with friends and acquaintances about religion. Developing that 25-word-or-less “elevator speech” about what Unitarian Universalism is eludes many of us. Usually benign and innocent conversations can quickly devolve into labored theological debates.

Even simple questions may cause you to sigh inwardly. For instance, how do you answer the question, “What church do you go to?” You might answer, “the Unitarian Universalist church,” which will usually generate a curious and questioning face because the listener has never heard of Unitarian Universalism. You might also say, “the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship,” which doubles the quizzical face because the listener does not equate a fellowship with a church.

There are many iterations of this conversation, all of which can cause mental fatigue and indigestion. “Are you a Christian church?” “Well, what do you believe?” “Is that the ‘gay’ church?” “Is that the same as the Universal Life church?” We too often avoid what should be a great opportunity for spreading the word about our living tradition because the dialogue is rarely simple and often frustrating.



The next time someone asks you what church you go to, I invite to think about what it actually means to “go” to church. Going to church might be taken literally – UU FoM is the place you go on Sunday mornings to celebrate that which is of worth (the root meaning of the word “worship”). Going to church might also mean a community of some involvement, whether you sing in the choir, teach religious education classes, attend special events, or simply follow us online.

I invite you to consider deepening that involvement. Perhaps you can serve on a Ministry Team or Committee; volunteer as an usher or greeter; or organize a social event or a date to work on the building and grounds.

And, if you are not already a member, ask yourself why not? If UU FoM is the place you “go” to church, then why not take full advantage of that involvement? As a member, you commit to being a steward of this beacon of liberal religion in the region. You help guarantee that this religious community will grow and sustain the principles of Unitarian Universalism for thousands of people for decades to come. As a member, you fully embrace our democratic process by exercising your right to vote on congregational issues.

Best of all, when you are a member of UU FoM, then the Fellowship becomes yours to truly claim. As a member, you share the responsibility of the mission and vision of this church with others who share your values and welcome your beliefs. And when someone asks you, “What church do you go to?” you can answer without hesitation or reluctance, “My church is the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship.”

- Rev Jeff

Small Group Ministries

Women's Group

Thursday, March 2, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

We will meet for conversation, connections, and camaraderie. The topics can range from the philosophical to everyday life and the group is open to anyone who identifies as female. Location will be at the Grand Traverse Pie Company on Saginaw Road in Midland. Please see the Facebook event or contact Amber Kramer for more information.

Men's Group

Tuesday March 7, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Join us for fellowship, conversation and fun (along with a slice of pie) at the UUFoM Men's Group Meetings. We meet the first Tuesday of each month. Meetings are held at the Grand Traverse Pie Company on Saginaw Road in Midland.

Three Jewels UU Sangha

Every Monday – 6:00 to 7:00 p.m.

Three Jewels Sangha meets at 6:00 PM for meditation and discussion. Three Jewels Sangha is an open group that welcomes all within reach of the Tri-City area who are interested in gathering in community with others practicing Buddhism or Buddhist meditation, or those just exploring different meditation practices. For more information, check the Sangha out on Facebook: Three Jewels Sangha of Midland (UUFoM)

<https://www.facebook.com/ThreeJewelsSanghaOfMidlanduufom>



Ancient Shores Covenant of UU Pagans

Sunday, March 19, 12:15-2:00 PM

Ancient Shores is the UUFOM chapter of CUUPS. The group explores pagan religions, historical points of interest - both recent and ancient, and engages in community rituals to celebrate the natural cycle of the world that surrounds us. We meet on the Third Sundays of each month after the service.

<https://www.facebook.com/ancientshorescuups/>



Ministry Teams

Facilities

Kitchen

Gisela Bailey

Aesthetics

Michaele Malecki

Member Services

Member Engagement

Sara Clavez

Welcoming & Outreach

open

Pastoral Care - Gisela Bailey,

Mary Johnson, Co-Chairs

Media

open

Lifespan Learning

Adult Enrichment

open

Children's Religious Education

Kurt Sonoras

Youth & Young Adults

Zollie Davis-Huntley

Living Our Values

Homelessness – Judith Hill

Climate Change – Jim Crissman

LGBT - open

Racial Justice - open

Worship

Worship

Judith Hill

Music

Kevin King

Choir

Andrew Schulz

Audio Visual

R.G. Converse

Governance Committees

Building and Grounds

Tim Wagner

Endowment

Tom Bailey, Jim Falender,

Co-Chairs

Financial Affairs

Stewardship

Jen Ciolino

Finance

Tom Bailey

Nominating

Jon Cleland-Host, Kathy French,

Andy Salogar

Committee on Ministry

Maxine Guettler, Donna King,

Michaele Malecki, Marsha

McDonald, Dan Sealey

Sacred Grove Article

(Continued from last month) I thought the responsible thing to do was to get help, perhaps finding a hunter to put the deer out of its misery. I spoke to a local who was well connected and was told that neither he nor his friends would dare go on the property. I decided to call 911 and report the sighting. It was easy to report the location since the TV tower was a significant landmark. I was assured that someone would take care of the animal. My mind was now at ease.

It is now the middle of January and I took Kishka for the same walk. I hoped to see the hole the deer dug and nothing else. We approached the site from a different direction and easily found the hole dug by the deer. However, the animal was also still there, frozen and partially eaten. Kishka went to its head and tugged at the deer's fur and then did the same to the hind quarters. Both the shoulder and hip muscle had been eaten to the bone but the belly was still intact. I found it hard to deal with my feelings about the injured animal when it was alive but I was more at ease now that I know that the suffering was over. I don't want to think about the suffering that it went through. I wonder about the number of deer that go through a similar fate as the years go by? But in any case, nature recycles the nutrients of these countless lives, providing new life again and again. As spring approaches, we'll see that life soon.

Dan Sealy

Lifespan Learning

All of who you are is sacred. All of who you are is welcome.



From the desk of the I-DRE: Heather Cleland-Host

Office Hours: 10 AM – 2 PM Tuesdays, Thursdays

By Appointment Fridays, Saturdays

Religious education is a journey that begins in childhood, but never ends. We all have something to offer each other from the youngest to the most wise. This year in Religious education, our community has been exploring our Principles together through multi-generational programming. Each month is dedicated to a principle.

March is dedicated to the fifth principle!

We affirm the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large. That is: speak up for what is right and vote!

RE Open House

Sunday, March 5, After the Service

We will be holding an informal "open house" Sunday after the service. Come over to the RE wing and meet our new nursery provider Jan Shea in the nursery, and while you are at it, check out the RE program rooms. They are not just for kids! Did you know we have a Library hidden away downstairs? We also have a new Retreat Room (Maria Mitchell room downstairs), where the sangha meets for meditation and where anyone can retreat for a private conversation or quiet. We will also have some information about next year's Lifespan program and the spring Jedi Academy for the middle school.

Pizza and the Principles: Joining our Voices (Fifth Principle)

Friday, March 24, 6:00 to 8:30 p.m.

We will have pizza, salad, and more (please email if you have special food needs). We will have vegetarian and halal/kosher options. No alcohol, pork, or gelatin will be served at all. We will have activities as you arrive to help meet each other, during the meal (small groups to eat together), and following the meal. This is just an opportunity to renew relationships and make new friends. The program is for all ages – kid and adult friendly! Come join us!



What to bring: Yourself! If you feel inspired, you can bring a sweet dessert to share, but this is intended as a free event.

Please RSVP by Sunday March 19, so we can know how much food to prepare:

Heather Cleland-Host, Interim DRE, UU Fellowship of Midland (989) 423-5932, dre@uufom.org

Children and Youth Programs

Welcome to our New Nursery Attendant: Jan Shea!

We would like to welcome Jan Shea as our new nursery attendant. Jan is a retiree, mother, and grandmother. She loves children, playing with them, and doing crafts and games with them. She has 6 years of experience working in a daycare, and she has cared for her children and grandchildren. She also has first aid and CPR training. She will be starting this Sunday March 5. Come and say hi!

Spirit Play Programs

Glow Worms (Age 4 to 2nd Grade) and Fireflies (2nd Grade – 5th Grade)

March 5 Subject: How one voice can encourage others to work together and make things better – Glow Worms will be hearing the story "[One](#)" and Fireflies will be learning "A Stone in the Temple" (Islamic parable)

March 12 Subject: Self-discipline and Addressing Anger – Glow Worms and Fire Flies will explore ways to deal with being angry in healthy ways. *Stories: Anh's Anger & Peace, Bugs, and Understanding*

March 19 Subject: Dance as a Spiritual Practice – We will be exploring different ways that dance is used in spirituality. This will be a joint program for all classes and will include examples and participatory activities. (This is the Chapel service).

March 26 Intergenerational Service on Peace.

NEW Middle School Program: Jedi Academy!

We are starting a new Middle School Class this month! This class will be available for students from 5th Grade to 8th Grade. The Middle School class will meet in the Youth Room. The Jedi Mindfulness curriculum will be used. This curriculum has been successful in other congregations and appeals to the interests of many of our Middle Schoolers. For more information about this, please go to <http://imaginorium.weebly.com/jedi-academy.html>

Exploration beginning for the 2017-2018 Program Year

The RE Ministry Teams have begun to work on the 2017-2018 Religious Education program. This year the Adult Program realigned its programming with the Children and Youth Program so that we would all be exploring Living the Principles together. Next year we are exploring continuing this shared journey by exploring the Six Sources together. The children's program year will be the Making Meaning year of the program and will visit each of the Six Sources – one per month, with December dedicated to all Six and Unitarian Universalism in general. Keep your eyes open for more news about this from the RE Team!

Adult Enrichment Team

The Adult Enrichment presents a broad range of educational programs. These programs provide participants opportunities to explore and experience ideas, philosophies, and activities; and to expand their religious knowledge as well as their awareness of current issues; thus motivating, enriching, and challenging them in their journey of lifelong learning. It is our mission to provide structured adult programming that promotes spiritual, religious, and intellectual enrichment within the context of Unitarian Universalism. It is our vision that the spiritual, religious, and intellectual lives of members and friends of UU FoM will be continuously enriched, and the sense of UU FoM as a "beloved community" will be continuously enhanced, as a result of lifelong learning opportunities of high quality provided by the AET in a safe and supportive environment.

Talking about Unitarian Universalism

Sunday March 12 After the Service

The Moral UU: How do you Determine Right and Wrong?

Cathy French will lead a discussion about how we live our lives through our UU Principles, and help us with mapping and exploring our own ethical and moral frameworks. Unitarian Universalism is a non-creedal faith, our choices and actions are what tell others what we believe. Every day we regularly face moral and ethical choices big or small. How do we intentionally or unintentionally make those decisions and how will we act? We will explore this by putting this question first in a historical context of the Locus of Moral Authority and then move on to identifying each of our own Locus using examples of Ethical Statements then finally develop our own ethical and moral framework by values mapping.

The Adult RE program for March 26 after the service will be the joint program with the rest of the congregation celebrating peace and the dedication of the Peace Pole.

Upcoming Events

Da Serendipity Auction!

Saturday, May 6 starting at 6:00 p.m.

Holy whah, all youse trolls! Da Serendipity Auction is gonna be a Yooper Party dis year, you betcha. We'll get back ta youse later wit da details – but fer now, SAVE DA DATE – SATURDAY, MAY 6. Say ya to da UP, eh!



Other Announcements

**Unitarian Universalist
Fellowship of Midland**
6220 Jefferson Avenue
Midland MI 48640-2934

Board of Directors

President

Speed Malecki
(989) 835-1915

President-Elect

TBD

Treasurer

TBD

Secretary

John Kinkema
(989) 415-9451

Member-at-Large

Charlie Enright
(989) 600-9696

Member-at-Large

Jill Haver-Crissman
(989) 297-8594

Staff

Minister

Rev. Jeff Liebmann
uurevjeff@gmail.com
(412) 760-6588

Choir Director

Andrew Schulz
saschulz@hotmail.com

Interim Director,

Religious Education

Heather Cleland-Host
hch.solstice@yahoo.com

Accompanist

Sarah Nuss-Warren

*The Unitarian Universalist
Fellowship of Midland
welcomes, affirms,
promotes, and celebrates
the full participation of all
persons in all of its
activities without regard
to age, gender, sexual
orientation, race, or any
other such category of
exclusion.*

Library

We have a wonderful library downstairs in the Religious Education wing where you will find hundreds of books on all manners of topics. We have special collections on Buddhism, Paganism, Addiction Recovery, Unitarian Universalism, and the considerable collection from the local Occupy the Tri movement. Feel free to browse and borrow books.

Newsletter

Do you want to get something in an upcoming Fellowship newsletter? Please email submissions to uufom@uufom.org by the third Sunday of the prior month or the 20th, whichever is later. This allows us to get all the material together and get the newsletter out sooner. Also, please submit text without formatting, which makes the task of editing much easier.

Membership

If you are interested in becoming a member of the Fellowship...fantastic! Talk to Rev. Jeff and he can walk you through the details.

Food Collection

On the first and third Sundays of the month, we collect food to contribute to the SAMS food bank. There will be a table set up in the foyer with baskets to place food.

Recommended Donations for the Food Pantry

Tuna	Canned chicken
Women's hygiene items (tampons, sanitary pads)	Canned Beans
Dish Soap	Shampoo
Laundry Soap	Split peas/Lentils (include some recipes?)
Soup base (watch the sodium)	Deodorant
Evaporated milk (no condensed)	Liquid body soap
Fortified cereals	Ziplock bags
Oatmeal	Gallon of vinegar
Canned soups	Depends undergarments
Peanut butter	Brown rice
New underwear (both genders, all sizes)	Pastas-gluten free
White Northern Beans	Pasta sauce
Canned tomatoes	Jiffy Corn muffin mix
Crackers (grainy if possible)	