



Feeding the Flame

*The Social Justice Newsletter of the
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Midland*

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On these days after an historic election in modern American history, it seems fitting that our *Feeding the Flame* newsletter rise from the ashes to once again inform and motivate social action in the Great Lakes Bay Region. The purpose of this newsletter is to disseminate information about pending legislation, informational events, and justice actions relating to any of the varied issues about which Unitarian Universalists and other religious liberals care deeply.

Following a seemingly endless campaign loaded with intolerant, hateful, and violent rhetoric, we need now more than ever to reunite in our commitment to justice, equity, and compassion in human relations, and to the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all.



◆ "If You're Overwhelmed By The Election, Here's What You Can Do Now"

This article from the [Huffington Post](http://www.huffpost.com) offers fantastic advice on dealing with the trauma of the election. Among their recommendations are:

Volunteer

There are plenty of organizations out there that simply need your time.

- Combat racism with [Showing Up For Racial Justice](#);
- Help your community with [AmeriCorps](#);
- End police violence at [Campaign Zero](#);
- Support Muslim family and friends at the [Council on American-Islamic Relations](#);
- [Be a poll worker in your next local election](#) and encourage voters to come out; and
- Join an organization that [helps immigrants and new Americans](#).

Practice Self Care

It's easy to forget that taking care of yourself is just as important as going out and doing something. If you find yourself in need of someone to talk to or having suicidal thoughts, reach out to the following:

- [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#): (800) 273-8255
- [Trans Lifeline](#): (877) 565-8860
- [Trevor Project](#): (866) 488-7386

Donate

- [Planned Parenthood](#): Give women the opportunities for proper healthcare, education, and activism.
- [The Future Project](#): Help the young people of America fulfill their potential.
- [RAINN](#): Assist the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network in combatting sexual violence, aiding victims, and ensuring that perpetrators are caught.
- [ACLU](#): Uphold the individual rights and liberties guaranteed to all by the Constitution and the laws of the United States.

◇ UUA President Offers Pastoral Message on the Election

Rev. Peter Morales, president of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), offered the following pastoral message as he reflects on the election:



"The election is finally over. Most of us are shocked, even horrified, by the results. We live in a nation whose deep divisions have been exposed. The wounds of this election will not heal soon. Many of us are emotionally exhausted and deeply offended by what we have experienced.

This is a time to take a deep breath and a long view. Our role as religious progressives committed to democracy, compassion and human dignity is to help bend our culture toward justice. Think of issues like

marriage equality and civil rights. The laws change when attitudes change. Our role is to help change attitudes, to lead by example.

Fear, anger, racism and xenophobia have created fertile ground for demagogues. Our voice is going to matter in the coming years. Our role, as always, will be to be a powerful voice for compassion and civil rights. Perhaps, at times, we may even be called upon to join with others to resist flagrant injustice.

For now, let us reflect and draw strength from one another. Together we can recover. Together we can shape the future."

◇ UUSC Statement on the Dakota Access Pipeline Standoff

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee issued a statement on the standoff involving the Standing Rock Sioux. "The brutal treatment of protectors standing with the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe has escalated in the past few weeks. Today, we hear of militarized actions by law enforcement toward young and elderly men and women who have been peaceful and non-violent, and the inhumane detainment of people in kennels, like wild animals. These intimidation tactics are weapons of the oppressors aimed at drowning out our voices. We must not give up now.

UUSC supports UUA's call for action and we urge all of you to do the same. The oppressive nature and violent tactics of this development against the protectors calls for a radical response. If there is ever time for us to stand together in solidarity, it is now. Join the tribe in standing up for their rights as indigenous peoples to protect and preserve their water, their future and their culture. Below, our partners at the College of Social Justice have provided a number of ways you can show your support.



Over the last few months, many of us have been moved by following [the powerful movement of indigenous leaders defending sacred land](#), and the earth and water we all share, from the threat of the dangerous [Dakota Access Pipeline](#). In recent days, we have also watched with horror as our computer screens have increasingly filled

with images of brutal aggression against and mass arrests of the courageous Water Protectors leading the #NoDAPL encampments in Standing Rock, ND.

Whether you are in a position to travel to Standing Rock, to put pressure on decision-makers, or to donate to meet direct needs on the ground, [we hope you will find a way to take action](#), and to [ground your efforts in learning about](#) and reflection upon the history of colonialism and systemic oppression of First Nations that we see continuing today.

Our Unitarian Universalist faith teaches us that we are all inextricably and radically interdependent; that we are part of an interconnected web of existence that encompasses all creatures and the earth. Following those deeply held theological values, in 2012, the UUA General Assembly [passed a resolution repudiating the Doctrine of Discovery](#), calling UUs to work in solidarity with native communities and to make reparations for the impacts of colonization, genocide, land theft, and continuing harms perpetrated against indigenous peoples. If we are to follow through with our pledge, we must acknowledge that we are called to show up in solidarity with our indigenous kin to protect the earth that gives us life, and to resist the legacy of colonization and genocide of the native peoples on whose land we all live.

The time is now. [Please join us in taking action today.](#)

◆ **Water for Life Presentation, Thursday November 17**

All are invited to attend – and bring interested friends – to a presentation about water issues in Michigan on Thursday, November 17, at 7:00 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Central Michigan in Mount Pleasant. The program, which UUFCM is co-sponsoring, will be presented by the Michigan Citizens for Water Conservation led by Karen Turnbull and will provide us with means by which we can work to preserve Michigan's fresh water resources.



◆ **It is Sharing Tree Time!**

Sharing Tree tags are available on the tree in the lobby. Take a tag and follow the directions. Sharing with those in need is always a way to warm your heart and share joy during the season. Contact Maxine Guettler with any questions.

◆ **Reversing Inequality Conference**



UUs for a Just Economic Community (UUJEC) and UUs for Social Justice in the Capitol Region (UUSJ) are teaming up to host the "Reversing Inequality" conference in Washington, D.C. from April 3 to 5, 2017. During this conference, Unitarian Universalists will learn about policies that ensure corporations and the 1% pay their fair share. These policies will also provide more funding for better education, to address climate change, and offer more training for workers displaced by globalization. Conference participants will go to the offices of lawmakers to explain to our decision makers that more investment is needed in early education, in finding ways to reduce carbon emissions and to rebuild our crumbling infrastructure to create jobs. All individuals need to have a fighting chance to pursue their dreams. [Stay connected to conference developments and registration information here.](#) And, if you haven't done so already, be sure to [register](#) to receive notifications when we open registrations. There will only be 120 spots so please sign up early!!!

◇ Strategic Planning Directions

At its Annual Meeting on October 30, 2016, the UU Fellowship of Midland adopted strategic planning directions, including one emphasizing our commitment to Advocacy and Service. This strategic planning direction states that as a Fellowship, and as individuals, we are called to offer our unique gifts and talents in service to building a better world today and for the future. As a Fellowship we will offer our members opportunities to enrich their lives through service and advocacy. Four issue areas were selected for which specific plans of service and advocacy would be developed in the coming months. These issues are:

- Global climate change;
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights;
- Homelessness; and
- Racial justice.

We are looking for people willing to commit to formulating a specific plan to address each issue comprehensively. If you are interested in leading one of these efforts, or serving on any of the planning teams, please contact Rev. Jeff.

What to do if you are witnessing Islamophobic harassment
A bystander's guide to help the person who's being targeted

1 Engage conversation.
Go to them, sit beside them and say hello. Try to appear calm, collected and welcoming. **IGNORE THE ATTACKER.**

2 Pick a random subject and start discussing it.
It can be anything: a movie you liked, the weather, saying you like something they wear and asking where they got it...

3 Keep building the safe space.
Keep eye contact with them and don't acknowledge the attacker's presence: the absence of response from you two will push them to leave the area shortly.

4 Continue the conversation until the attacker leaves & escort them to a safe place if necessary.
Bring them to a neutral area where they can recollect themselves; respect their wishes if they tell you they're ok and just want to go.

Illustrations include: a bystander approaching a targeted woman; the bystander saying "HI, HOW ARE YOU?"; the bystander saying "THE WEATHER LATELY IS SO..."; the bystander saying "MY SISTER TOLD ME ABOUT THIS MOVIE"; the bystander saying "IRRELEVANT"; and the bystander and targeted woman walking away together.

◆ November 9, Anniversary of *Kristallnacht*



Five years after Adolf Hitler was elected Chancellor of Germany, the country took what might have been the final step into madness. In a 48-hour period, soldiers, paramilitary, and citizens destroyed or damaged 7,000 Jewish-owned business, 1,000 synagogues, and hundreds of homes. Hundreds of Jews were killed and thousands arrested and sent to concentration camps. *Kristallnacht* (The Night of Broken Glass) offered the German people one last chance to step back before jumping off the cliff of the unspeakable.

This article recounts the first-hand experience of 90 year old Henry Rosenthal, a Holocaust survivor. In this time when our American experience scarily mirrors that of 1933 Weimar Germany, this cautionary tale bears witness to the possible.

<http://www.sun-sentinel.com/florida-jewish-journal/opinion/fl-jjps-rosenthal-1109-20161108-story.html>

◆ Unitarian Universalist Refugee and Immigrant Services and Education

UURISE is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization incorporated in 2007 to empower immigrants and refugees in the U.S. by offering direct legal services, particularly to those who have few resources to obtain legal assistance. UURISE provides legal advice and representation to individual clients and extends services throughout the U.S. through the provision of workshops and trainings on immigration and advocacy. Through strategic partnerships, intensive coalition building and volunteer development, UURISE has crafted a method of extending legal services to large groups at no or nominal cost.

Improving treatment of immigrants and refugees is a moral issue that requires ongoing community education and action to raise awareness and impact policy. UURISE is founded on and grounded in Unitarian Universalist principles which include a passionate vision to affirm and promote "a respect for the inherent worth and dignity of every person." In harmony with these principles and in accordance with laws governing nonprofit organizations, UURISE is radically inclusive, intentionally creating a safe and welcoming environment for all people, without discrimination.



Your donation makes you a critical partner in our work providing affordable legal services to marginalized immigrants, and empowering them to prevent catastrophic loss caused by family separation. Your support allows us to educate individuals and communities, and advocate for policies which lead to fuller participation in society.

[\\$50 helps a family receive a consultation at our free legal clinics](#)

[\\$100 helps a permanent resident become a U.S. Citizen](#) or [\\$10/Month](#)

[\\$180 helps a family create an individualized Safety Plan](#) or [\\$15/Month](#)

[\\$240 helps a DREAMer apply for DACA](#) or [\\$20/Month](#)

[\\$360 helps an undocumented victim of domestic violence apply for permanent residence](#)

[\\$500 helps a victim of human trafficking apply for immigration relief](#)

[\\$1000 helps a victim of persecution or torture apply for asylum](#)

◇ **Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense Meeting, Sunday, November 13**

The Great Lakes Bay Region MOMS Demand Action for Gun Sense Chapter will meet on November 13, at 3:00 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Midland. We will finalize plans for the December vigil and provide legislative updates. Please bring a friend and help us build our local chapter!

Near San Francisco, a home in Noe Valley flew a Nazi flag where kids walk by to get to school.

A white middle school student brought a Trump sign to school and told a black classmate it was time for him to get "back in place".

A gay New York City man getting on a bus was told that he should "Enjoy the concentration camps, f**t!"**

The NYU Muslim Students Association found the word "Trump!" scrawled on the door of their prayer room.

A female seminary student was stopped at a coffee shop with the words, "Smile sweetheart, we beat the c*."**

Parents of children of color spent the day picking up their children early from elementary, middle, and high schools across the country because they were inundated with slurs and harassment and unable to study.

A group of Hispanic kids in Raleigh were taunted by white children, telling them they were "going back to Mexico."

This is not the time to appeal to minorities and marginalized communities to "come together in unity" with white people right now...

Oppressed people aren't obliged to make nice with their oppressors.

The bullied don't owe anything to the bullies.

Victims don't have to make their assailants feel better.

Young children of color aren't responsible to educate racists children.

**From "White Christians Who Voted for Donald Trump: Fix This. Now."
by John Pavlovitz (<http://johnpavlovitz.com/>)**

THE PRIDE CENTER
at SVSU

SV
SU **MILITARY STUDENT AFFAIRS**
THE ONE-STOP SHOP

PRESENTS

ERIC ALVA

Retired Staff Sergeant Eric Alva was one of the first troops to be deployed for the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003 and the first American wounded in the war. Stepping on a landmine just hours after the ground war began, Alva became the war's first Purple Heart recipient.

After serving in the military for 13 years, Alva retired as a Staff Sergeant and returned to college. It was there that he took the momentous step of coming out as a gay man who had proudly served and sacrificed for his country.

As the national spokesperson for the Human Rights Campaign's effort to repeal the military's discriminatory "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy—which they were successful in helping put an end to in 2011—Alva is now a popular speaker on diversity in the workplace, speaking at organizations such as Johnson & Johnson, Toyota, Raytheon, AOL, Union Pacific Railroad, and NASA.

With a story of genuine courage, Alva continues to champion civil rights for all individuals and serves as a powerful role model for remaining true to one's self.



November 16th at 7pm
SVSU—Ott Auditorium
(GS122)

This program is supported by the SVSU Foundation Resource Grant Program

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