



~ March 2026 ~

The Bellnote Mini-News

UNIVERSALIST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF EAST LIBERTY
2231 Jefferson Road, Clarklake, MI 49234
(517) 553-4311 Located 3/4 miles West of U.S. 127

Message from the Minister

March – The Month of Paying Attention

Each month our theme gives us a lens through which to look at our shared life. March offers a deceptively simple one: Paying Attention. We often imagine community is shaped mostly by decisions, programs, or leadership, but just as often it is shaped by perception. The same moment can feel welcoming or frustrating, hopeful or discouraging, depending on what we notice. In fact, much of our experience of belonging begins not with what happens, but with where our awareness settles.

Two people can walk into the same gathering and leave having experienced two entirely different events.

One notices the warm greeting at the door, the person quietly making the coffee, the choir practicing, the Board member staying late after a meeting, the newcomer sitting alone and trying to decide whether this place is safe.

The other notices the microphone squeal, the awkward pause, the typo in the order of service, the decision they wouldn't have made, the thing they wish were different.

Both people are telling the truth.

But they are not living in the same congregation.

Because communities are not built only by decisions or leadership or plans. They are built by attention. What we consistently notice becomes the emotional climate

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Sunday Services

Mar 1 - "Stewardship Kickoff"

- Led by: Rev. Dan Miyake

In person or live on Facebook.

This Sunday begins our annual Stewardship Pledge Drive. This topic, even though few people like to talk about money, is a critically important aspect of our church's health and vitality and viability for the future. Rev. Dan will share his thoughts about our Stewardship theme of "Paying it Forward". A potluck dinner will follow the service.

Mar 8 - "MLK JR., Boston College and Jesus and the Disinherited"

- Led by: TBD

In person or live on Facebook

Mar 15 - "Spirituality in Mathematics"

- Led by: Cory Page

In person or live on Facebook.

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Calendar

- 1 Sunday ~~ Service ~ Led by: Rev. Dan ~ 11:00 am
- 1 Sunday YUUMM Meeting ~ School House ~ 12:30 pm
- 5 Thurs Personal Care Ministry @ Partnership Place, 801 S. Mechanic ~ 4:30-6:30 pm
- 8 Sunday ~~ Service ~ Led by: TBD ~ 11:00 am
- 9 Mon Church Cleaning ~ by: Vicki Haynes
- 12 Thurs Ladies Lunch @ Alfa Coney Island inside the Jackson Crossing ~ 12:00 am
- 15 Sunday ~~ Service ~ Led by: Cory Page ~ 11:00 am
- 16 Mon Board Meeting ~ 12:30 am via Zoom
- 22 Sunday ~~ Service ~ Led by: Melanie Baker, Guest Speaker ~ 11:00 am
- 23 Mon Church Cleaning ~ by: Vicki Haynes
- 23 Mon The Bellnote Newsletter, Submissions Due
- 29 Sunday ~~ Service ~ Led by: Rev. Dan ~ 11:00 am

- May 2 Celebration of Life of Jane Volk ~ 1:00-4:00 pm

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BOARD PRESIDENT ~ ANN GREEN ~ GREENANNM@JCCMI.EDU

Rev. Dan's Column Continued....

we all inhabit together.

There's an old story about two wolves battling within us — one generous, patient, and hopeful; the other resentful and suspicious. When asked which one wins, the answer is simple: the one we feed. In other words, what we pay attention to the most becomes our reality.

In our congregational life, if we pay attention to appreciation, then energy grows. If distance, apathy, and non-involvement circulate, people become spectators. If negative commentary circulates, we slowly become critics of a place we actually care about.

Most congregations do not struggle because people don't love them. They struggle because people begin to experience them as something they observe rather than something they help create. The shift is subtle. We attend instead of participate. We evaluate instead of engage. And over time the work of the community quietly concentrates into fewer and fewer hands. Yet the opposite is also true. The moment people begin noticing needs, they begin meeting them. The moment people notice effort, encouragement multiplies it. Participation rarely begins with a sign-up sheet. It begins with attention.

The same is true for concerns. Every healthy community needs honest feedback. But the direction that feedback travels matters. When concerns move toward the people who can respond, relationships strengthen and trust grows. When concerns move sideways through the community, they create frustration without resolution and distance without understanding. One path builds community. The other builds uncertainty. Paying attention, then, is not simply about mindfulness. It is about authorship. It is how we decide whether this congregation is something that happens around us or something we are actively shaping together. So, for this month, I want to offer a small shared practice:

Each week in March: Notice one thing that helps this community exist — and thank the person connected to it.

Notice one place where your presence could make something lighter — and offer it. Notice one concern — and bring it directly, kindly, to the person who can actually hear it and do something about it. Complaining to your friend doesn't solve anything, and only feeds the Bad Wolf. Small acts of positive attention accumulate. They feed the Good Wolf. They change how a place feels. They remind us that a congregation is not a performance we attend but a relationship we practice and engage with. Relationships grow in the direction of the attention we give them.

So, how will you choose to feed the Good Wolf this month?

REV. DAN

Sunday Services Continued...

Mar 22 - "Spiritual Journey" - Led by: Melanie Baker, Guest Speaker In person or live on Facebook.

Mar 29 - "Seeing What's Been Invisible" - Led by: Rev. Dan Miyake In person or live on Facebook.

Most of what shapes our lives hides in plain sight. Habits, expectations, unspoken roles, even people can disappear into familiarity. This service invites us to look again — not harder, but differently — and discover what becomes possible when the unseen finally comes into view.

<http://www.libertyu.org/category/newsletter/>

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