



November 2025

The Bellnote

UNIVERSALIST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF EAST LIBERTY
2231 Jefferson Road
Clarklake, MI 49234
(517) 295-3290 - New(er again) Church Number
Located 3/4 miles West of U.S. 127

Minister

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Message from the Minister

Thanksgiving for Imperfect Things

I think it's safe to say that perfection is overrated.

This time of year, we're surrounded by glossy magazine spreads of perfectly roasted turkeys, families smiling in coordinated sweaters, and tables that look like Martha Stewart herself stopped by with a glue gun and divine inspiration. But if your Thanksgiving is anything like mine, there's a good chance that the mashed potatoes will form a few lumps, the cranberry sauce will slither out of the can with a satisfying "thwop," and someone will forget to thaw the rolls until ten minutes before dinner.

And you know what? I'm grateful for all of it. I'm grateful for the burnt toast that reminds me I was distracted by feeding the cats. I'm grateful for mismatched socks that prove laundry day is a flexible concept. I'm even grateful for the unidentifiable leftovers in the back of my fridge because they remind me that I have more than enough to eat — and that I should probably clean out the fridge more often.

Gratitude, it turns out, doesn't need perfection to thrive. It just needs awareness — a willingness to notice the small, ordinary blessings that fill our days. The warmth of a coffee cup on a cold morning. The text from a friend that simply says, "Thinking of you." The moment the cat finally decides to forgive you for existing.

When we nurture gratitude, we're not pretending everything is fine. We're learning to see what's good and life-giving even when things are messy, complicated, or a little burnt around the edges.

It's easy to be thankful when everything goes right. The real spiritual practice begins when life doesn't match the picture on the box — when plans fall apart, when people disappoint us, when the gravy congeals faster than expected. Gratitude, in those moments, becomes less about celebration and more about resilience. It's the quiet voice that says, "Even here, even now, there is still something good."

That's one of the gifts of our Unitarian Universalist faith: we don't have to pretend the world is perfect to find holiness in it. We just have to pay attention. We believe that the sacred shows up not only in grand miracles but also in small mercies — in shared laughter, in honest conversation, in the simple act of showing up for one another, even when we're tired or grumpy or unsure what to bring to the potluck.

Over the years, life has taught me that gratitude grows best in the cracks — in those imperfect moments when we're most real with one another. When the sound system fails and the congregation

Continued on Page 5.... ~ 1 ~

Notes from the Board

On October 13 the board held our regular meeting. After reading the board covenant and approving the September minutes (which are posted on the social hall wall by the kitchen), board members signed a thank you card to George Haynes for reinstalling our historical sign. Treasurer Laurie Campbell summarized the balance sheet and income statement to date with a note that our checking account continues to have a healthy balance and at present income continues to exceed expenditure, which is good news.

The Minister's Report asked us to consider a program council where committee chairs would meet regularly which was tabled. The items to name a denominational liaison to the UUA regional association and a *Meet the Moment* initiative would be addressed in the strategic plan discussion. Committee Reports **Building and Grounds:** Lammers did their fall check-up for the two furnaces in the church building. Brooklyn Heating will come out Mon. 10/20 to check the non-working furnace in the schoolhouse. The newly reinstalled historic sign should be gently cleaned twice a year, so paint lasts longer and we are seeking volunteers. We have estimates for replacements of cracked glass panes in social hall and will seek an estimate for re-caulking the front steps. Doug Greene was recognized for all the work he regularly does for upkeep. **Worship:** Sermons are planned out for several weeks and the Worship Committee is looking to focus on more spiritual topics. **Membership:** The committee is brainstorming more social events. **RE:** is still one person short on nursery volunteers. The teaching schedule is filled through May. **Technology:** continues fully staffed and **Social Justice** receives updates. **Caring:** sent out birthday, anniversary, and get-well cards, made phone calls, and sent a funeral flower arrangement.

The Board continued discussion toward finalization of the Strategic Plan with particular attention to connecting our congregation with the larger UUA spiritually and in terms of joining the Elkhart Fellowship and other small congregations for active participation in UU initiatives.

Next Meeting: Monday, November 10, 2025 at 10:00 am (in person at UUCEL)

Ann

**Submitted by: Ann Green
Board President**

Notes from Religious Ed

Volunteers Update

We have at least one opening for a teacher assistant volunteer, which means a commitment of nine Sundays, scattered throughout the school year. UUCEL wants to continue to be an inviting church for families to bring their kids. So please consider answering this call!

UUCEL is proud to offer nursery care for babies and preschool children every Sunday. We have a roster of adult volunteers who kindly give one Sunday a month to make this happen (really, it's only about 45 minutes per month!). Thank you

Submitted by: RE Committee



Watch on Facebook:

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

Reminder of First Sunday Information for Social Hour Host

Those on the team that is on the **1st Sunday of Each Month** - Please READ the NOTE that has been added to the paper copy on the corkboard in the KITCHEN. - With directions YOU need to KNOW.

Thank you From the Board



Our Historical Sign Story

On October 9, 2011 this Historical Sign was dedicated to the church. Member Dorothy Kerr is the one who made all of this happen, with her determination to have this made and written up with the wording that states. "Liberty township was organized in 1837. Early settlers, many from New York State, founded the Universalist society in 1856. They organized a Ladies Aid in 1869 and a school in 1876. The society held services in the school and the Methodist church until 1881, when it built this church at a cost of \$2,400. Two days of sermons and "sumptuous" dinners preceded the church's March 2, 1882 dedication. After the dedication sermon Baptists, Methodists and Universalist alike donated the funds needed to retire the remaining debt. The bell was donated to the church in 1922 and in 1940 the locally gathered fieldstone staircase was added. In 1961 the society joined in the national merger with the Unitarian Church".

In December 2024 the sign was taken down to get re-painted by the company that made it, Sewah Studios Inc. in Ohio. After months of being out for repair it was delivered to our home as George has a forklift and that was needed to get it off the delivery truck - this was on September 25th. The repainted sign was hung back up by Kathy and George Haynes along with his Bucket Truck and a few other tools. Straps were placed around it until the ground and the post realigned again.

Submitted by: Kathy Haynes



The above picture was is taken in 2011



The above picture was taken in December 2024 in the barn of George and Kathy Haynes just before getting ready to be shipped to Ohio.

Reminder to all Social Hour Teams

When done with the regular social hour duties, please make sure the following are done:

- ~Open all registers in social hall
- ~Close the doors that go upstairs to sanctuary

Submitted by: Alyce Oosting

Meetings and Events for UUCEL

Announcements for November from Rev. Dan

We will have a joint intergenerational service on November 23 with the Elkhart congregation. Rev. Dan will be in-person at UUCEL, and UUFEB will Zoom in. Note that this service, like our other joint services, will begin at 10:30, not 11:00!

Ladies' Lunch

The Ladies Lunch will be meeting on Thursday November 13, at SOAR Café and Farms at 401 N. Mechanic St. at 11:30 am. If you are not on Joan's list and want to come, please call her by Wednesday morning. Please see Joan's contact information on the top of the Supplement Page.

Submitted by: Joan Bernstein

UU Younger

The UU Younger group (known as YUUMM) has started a recurring meeting the first Sunday of every month at 12:30 pm in the school house. It will include snacks, board games and conversation.

Submitted by: Scott Reese

Sock Drive

Salena Taylor, founder of Partial to Girls/Women Taking Action, is conducting another sock drive. We've donated before - let's fill the basket inside the church front door again with more socks for more boys and girls! Bring socks through November.

Submitted by: Ann Green

Quarterly Donations

The Social Mission Designee for the 2nd quarter is **Residents in Action, Inc.** is a nonprofit community - driven initiative, focused on addressing social issues, particularly homelessness and racial equity. Please, give by using the donate button on our website or by contributing with a check to the church with Residents in Action in the memo line.

Submitted by: Gretchen Marshall & Ann Green

Time to celebrate!

What: Harvest Dinner

When: Sunday, November 30 right after church in the social hall.

How: By signing up with what passing dish you are planning to share and/or a story about a memorable autumn. Be ready for a surprise!

Why: For the gorgeous season and because we like getting together.

Contact Ann for more info.

Submitted by: Ann Green

Grief In Slow Motion

There was no memorial service for the last time you went out to dinner together, the last time they told you a joke, the last time they said your name. No one sent you flowers for the social events you've missed, the roles that have changed, the plans that will never be, the decisions you have to make. When you love someone with dementia, Parkinson's, or other progressive neurological disease, you lose so many things along the way, long before you lose your person. When we don't recognize and process our losses, they build up and weigh us down.

Join **Jill Terwilliger, M.Div., CPCC**, grief coach, educator, and UU minister for **Grief in Slow Motion**, a 4-session grief group combining learning, sharing and support for people caring for loved ones with dementia. <https://www.anbaucoaching.com/slowmotion>

Grief in Slow Motion will take place live on zoom the 2nd Friday of the month from 10-11:15am EST from October to January. The first session is October 10. The cost is \$75 for all four sessions. The group is live, confidential, and will not be recorded for public sharing. Register here: <https://www.anbaucoaching.com/slowmotion> Whether you are a direct caregiver or indirect, you are allowed to honor and grieve your losses, even while your person is still alive. You don't have to do this alone.

Jill Terwilliger, M.Div., CPCC (Jill was a minister at UUCEL)

Submitted by: Dan & Ann

Rev. Dan's Column Continued

Updated info of the Jackson Personal Care Ministry --

JPCM is a cooperative mission of 7 area churches now, it was 14. We offer a weekly pantry of personal care and cleaning products to anyone residing in Jackson County. Our team, (First Congregational and UUCEL, just 2 churches, was 3) works the first Thursday of the month, and that would be November 6th. Because we are serving more people, the number of volunteers needed has grown from 3-4. Please let me know if you can help. Volunteers are asked to arrive at 4:30 pm. **JPCM has now relocated to St. John's Church** at 801 S. Mechanic St., Jackson, 49203. Distributions is still on Thursday evenings 5:00- 6:30 pm. It's an excellent way to meet the community and give back! If you'd like to work or have any questions. Nena's contact info is on the top of the Supplement Page if anyone needs more info. **Submitted by: Nena Obits**

starts singing anyway. When a child drops the chalice lighting words halfway through and everyone cheers them on. When someone says, "I'm struggling," and someone else says, "Me too," and in that instant, both feelless alone.

So this month, as we turn toward Thanksgiving, I invite you to nurture gratitude for the imperfect things — the lumpy potatoes, the uneven lives, the beautiful, awkward humanity we share. Because when we practice gratitude for what is real instead of waiting for what's ideal, we discover that joy doesn't require everything to be perfect. It just requires us to be present.

May we give thanks for the meals that come out right, and for the ones that don't.

For the people who show up on time, and for the ones who arrive fashionably late but bring dessert.

For the conversations that change our minds, and for the silences that remind us to listen.

Gratitude doesn't demand perfection — only participation. So let's join in, lumps and all.

Happy Thanksgiving, friends.

Rev. Dan Miyake

2 Announcements

from Rev. Dan

Soul Matters

Rev. Dan will be leading the first Soul Matters group on Sunday, November 16 after Social Hour. If you signed up but have not yet received your packet, please contact Rev. Dan.

UU History Class

Rev. Dan will be leading a six-session UU History class on Thursday evenings at 7:00 via Zoom; the last of the 6 weeks is November 6.

We Welcome Your Membership

Not a member? We'd love to have you join our spiritual community. New members signify their commitment by signing the Membership Book during a scheduled in person church service. It is understood that members actively support their congregation through attendance, service and/or financial commitment. To start your process of becoming an official member of our lively, compassionate and challenging congregation, speak with Rev. Dan Miyake or a member of the membership committee.

LOST & FOUND ----- Are they YOURS ??

----A bag was in the frig with an Apple & oversized Dark Sunglasses - the Apple has been tossed out ---- Sweater/Jacket - Light Gray & White w/ Zipper - Size X-L ---- Shawl, Dark Blue, Long Rectangle w/ Fringe and Buttons by: harve benard ----Scarf - Very Long, Tan Knitted w/ 4 rows of Cable by: Isotoner ----Cap/Hat - White w/ Intermobile Racing & N norman ---- oversized Dark Sunglasses ----- These items are in the bottom part of the bookcase in the social hall. **Submitted by: Kathy Haynes**



November 's UUCEL Calendar

All Events are at the church Unless Otherwise Noted

- 2 Sunday ~~ Service ~ Led by: Darrin Palmer ~ 11:00 am
2 Sunday YUUMM Meeting ~ School House ~ 12:30 pm
3 Mon Church Cleaning ~ by: Vicki Haynes
6 Thurs Personal Care Ministry @ St. John's Church, 801 S. Mechanic St ~ 4:30-6:30 pm
6 Thurs UU History Class ~ via Zoom w/ Rev. Dan ~ 7:00 pm # 6 week
9 Sunday ~~ Service ~ Led by: Cory Page ~ 11:00 am
10 Mon Board Meeting ~ 10:00 am
13 Thurs Ladies Lunch @SOAR Cafe and Farms ~ 11:30 am
16 Sunday ~~ Service ~ Led by: Rev. Dan ~ 11:00 am
16 Sunday Soul Matters Group w/ Rev. Dan after Social Hour
17 Mon The Bellnote Newsletter, Submissions Due a week early due to Thanksgiving
17 Mon Church Cleaning ~ by: Vicki Haynes
23 Sunday ~~ Service ~ Led by: Rev. Dan ~ 10:30 am
30 Sunday ~~ Service ~ Led by: Patty Brue ~ 11:00 am with Planned Potluck Dinner to follow

Weekly Volunteer Schedule

Sunday, Nov 2 ~~ Greeter, Alyce O ~~ Usher, Paul J & Helper Needed
~~ Social Hour Host, Alyce O & Team 7

~~ Technology Streaming, Tom P ~~ Worship Associate, Nathan B
~~ R.E. K-5, Classes w/ Lori A & Alice P ~~ Nursery w/ Nena O & Sue R

Sunday, Nov 9 ~~ Greeter, Lori A ~~ Usher, Paul J & Helper Needed
~~ Social Hour Host, Deb H & Team 1

~~ Technology Streaming, Mike B ~~ Worship Associate, TBA
~~ R.E. K-5, Classes w/ Kerry H & Darrin P ~~ Nursery w/ Alyce O & Alice P

Sunday, Nov 16 ~~ Greeter, Joan B ~~ Usher, Paul J & Helper Needed
~~ Social Hour Host, Kathy H & Team 2

~~ Technology Streaming, Tom P ~~ Worship Associate, Tiffany R
~~ R.E. K-5, Classes w/ Kerry H & Darrin P ~~ Nursery w/ Kathy H & Ashley S

Sunday, Nov 23 ~~ Greeter, Jackie J ~~ Usher, Paul J & Helper Needed
~~ Social Hour Host, Nena O & Team 3

~~ Technology Streaming, Rob G ~~ Worship Associate, Ben B
~~ R.E. K-5, Classes w/ Intergenerational ~~ Nursery w/ Donna H & Nicole B

Sunday, Nov 30 ~~ Greeter, Julie F ~~ Usher, Paul J & Helper Needed

~~ Social Hour Host, Nancy S / Rob G & Team 4/Panned Potluck Dinner - Harvest Style
~~ Technology Streaming, Ann G ~~ Worship Associate, Lauric C
~~ R.E. K-5, Classes w/ Intergenerational ~~ Nursery w/ two helpers needed

~~ Celebrating Over 167 Years of Liberal Religion ~~
All Sunday Services Start at 11:00 am

Nov 2 - “Gratitude and Wonder”

- Led by: **Darrin Palmer**

Masks are optional. In person or live on Facebook.

Nov 9 - “TBA”

- Led by: **Cory Page**

Masks are optional. In person or live on Facebook.

Nov 16 - “Grateful Enough”

- Led by: **Rev. Dan**

Masks are optional. In person or live on Facebook.

In a culture that tells us we never have—or are—enough, what does it mean to nurture genuine gratitude? Join Rev. Dan Miyake for a thoughtful and gently humorous exploration of what it means to live gratefully enough. Through story, reflection, and quiet ritual, we’ll rediscover gratitude not as a performance, but as a spiritual rebellion against scarcity—and a practice of noticing that what we already have is holy.

Nov 23 - “Wildly Thankful: Gratitude Anyway”

- Led by: **Rev. Dan**

10:30 am starting time with Rev. Dan at UUCEL, Zooming in with UUFE

Masks are optional. In person or live on Facebook.

In this lighthearted intergenerational service, we’ll explore gratitude that doesn’t wait for perfection — the kind that shows up with muddy boots and a sense of humor. Through story, song, and a shared “Thanks Anyway” ritual, we’ll celebrate the blessings hidden in life’s surprises and mishaps. Come ready to laugh, reflect, and give thanks... *anyway!*

Nov 30 - “TBA”

- Led by: **Patty Brue**

Masks are optional. In person or live on Facebook.

This will be a shortened service today with a planned potluck dinner to follow.

Please bring a passing dish and stay for fellowship and good food.

See Page 4 for more info, see you there.



From The Editors:

“The Bellnote” is a monthly publication of UUCEL. If this is your 1st copy of the church’s newsletter, welcome. Our church year runs from July 1st - June 30th. The church board asks those that receive the paper version of the newsletter pay a \$18.00 per year subscription fee. New visitors will get a few months free, after that a subscription fee will be asked for, or change to an on-line version that is free of charge.

For the December issue, the information is needed by: Monday, November 17 ~~ send submissions to: uucel_bellnote@yahoo.com or in writing to Kathy or Vicki, thank you. We want to thank Rev. Dan Miyake, Ann Green, Nancy Smith, Gretchen Marshall, Darrin Palmer, Deb Hartsuff, Nena Obits, Scott Reese, Vicki Haynes, Tech Comm., and Worship Comm., for their news items this month.

A Quick Look of What's Inside - Full Info on Page 7

Nov 2 - "Gratitude and Wonder" - Led by: Darrin Palmer

Nov 9 - "TBA" - Led by: Cory Page

Nov 16 - "Grateful Enough"- Led by: Rev. Dan

Nov 23 - "Wildly Thankful: Gratitude Anyway" - Led by: Rev. Dan

with a 10:30 am starting time with Rev. Dan at UUCEL, Zooming in with UUFE

Nov 30 - "TBA" Led by: Patty Brue and Planned Potluck Dinner - Harvest Style



Church's Website ~ <http://www.libertyuu.org>
Church's E-Mail Address ~ uuliberty@gmail.com
Wednesday's Chimes ~ WednesdayChimes@gmail.com
Church's Facebook Page ~ <http://www.facebook.com/libertyuu>
The Bellnote's E-Mail Address ~ UUCEL_Bellnote@yahoo.com
Bellnote Newsletter ~ <https://libertyuu.org/category-newsletter/newsletter>

OUR 7 PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSES

WE, THE MEMBER CONGREGATIONS OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION, COVENANT TO AFFIRM AND PROMOTE:

- ~ The inherent worth and dignity of every person
- ~ Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations
- ~ Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations
- ~ A free and responsible search for truth and meaning
- ~ The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large
- ~ The goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all
- ~ Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part

Where People Care About Each Other And Care About The World.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

CLARKLAKE, MI 49234

2231 JEFFERSON ROAD

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF EAST LIBERTY

