



## Monthly Musings from Rev. Melissa Carvill-Ziemer

**W**e have been participating in the Soul Matters Sharing Circle for a couple of years and the circle now has over 75 participating Unitarian Universalist congregations. One of the best things about the circle is the packets that are created each month. Every minister in the circle is invited to submit readings, questions, book and film suggestions and more and these are curated into a packet which is then sent back out for use by all the participating congregations. One of the suggestions in the packet includes suggestions for spiritual exercises. I really like this one from Soul Matters minister Rev. Claire Feingold Thoryn. I will be interested to know if you try it out.

Peace,

*Melissa*

### #soulblessings

*"If you go online to sites like Instagram or Twitter and search for the hashtag "blessed" (hashtag is sort of like adding a keyword to something), [you'll see] people, especially celebrities, will post something that is essentially bragging and add **#blessed** to attempt to make the post sound humble. Celebrity photos of the red carpet, huge diamond rings, champagne, and extravagant travel, all are apparently signs that the recipient is **#blessed**."*

*Lots of people use the hashtag in a mocking or ironic way, like the person who tweeted: Caught a piece of bacon falling out of my sandwich right before it hit the ground. **#blessed***

## Sunday Services

9:45 and 11:30 am

228 Gougler Ave.  
Kent, Ohio 44240  
Phone: 330-673-4247  
Fax: 330-677-4772  
[www.kentuu.org](http://www.kentuu.org)

### Minister:

Rev. Melissa Carvill-Ziemer  
[minister@kentuu.org](mailto:minister@kentuu.org)

### Minister's office hours:

Tuesday - Friday  
By appointment

### Congregational

#### Administrator:

MaryBeth Hannan

#### Office hours:

Mon. through Fri. 9 - 4

### Interim Director of Religious Education:

Karen LoBracco  
[dre@kentuu.org](mailto:dre@kentuu.org)  
Cell: 585-730-0686

### DRE's Office Hours:

In Kent 11 days/month  
Always available by email/phone

### Music Director:

Hal Walker

### Commissioned Lay Leader:

Rev. Christie Anderson  
[christiea@neo.rr.com](mailto:christiea@neo.rr.com)

### Affiliated

#### Community Minister:

Rev. Renee Ruchotzke  
[zimlar@juno.com](mailto:zimlar@juno.com)

### Newsletter editor:

Saul Flanner  
[newsletter@kentuu.org](mailto:newsletter@kentuu.org)

### Deadline:

The 20th of each month

POSITION  
AVAILABLE

*It's funny, but all these **#blessed** blessings suck all the real energy and power from the concept of feeling blessed—of soul-deep gratitude. Real honest gratitude is never smug or braggy. A blessing is richer than wealth and tastier than bacon.*

*Additionally, those social media posts on Instagram and Twitter only show a self-curated image. **#blessed** is a manic, 'Jazz hands!' kind of happiness. Everyone is smiling and has great hair. A **#blessed** life apparently never includes pain or loss, or even mild discord or inconvenience.*

*But of course we know that kind of life is impossible. I think a truly blessed life comes from: living with integrity; loving your work, most of the time; loving the people around you, most of the time; and loving yourself, most of the time."*

So this month let's right the ship! Let's together honor those blessings that are richer than wealth and tastier than bacon, and that are true gifts, most of the time. Here are three options to participate in this communal spiritual exercise:

- If you are on Twitter: tweet moments of true blessing using the hashtag **#soulblessings**.
- If you do Instagram: post pictures of the **#soulblessings** you see in the world around you (and be sure to tag your picture).
- If you use Facebook (yes, hashtags work on Facebook too!), you're invited to post pictures or tell a story of **#soulblessings** both on your own personal page as well as on our group Soul Matters Facebook page.

Do it throughout the month, even daily if that feels like a good discipline for you. The point is for us to experience **#soulblessings** together.



## UPCOMING SERVICES

9:45 and 11:30 am

### May 1 - How to Give a Blessing

*Rev. Melissa Carvill Ziemer  
and Worship Associate Lisa Thiel*

In his book *To Bless the Space Between Us*, John O'Donohue suggests that blessing "is a way of life, a lens through which the whole world is transformed." We will start our reflection upon the meaning of blessing by considering what it takes to prepare. How can we give blessings?

### May 8 - How to Receive a Blessing

*Rev. Melissa Carvill Ziemer  
and Worship Associate Becky Cline*

John O'Donohue also says that "Whenever you give a blessing, a blessing returns to enfold you." For some, the act of receiving a blessing is harder than giving one. How can we open ourselves more fully to receive the blessings that come to us?

### May 15 - "You Owe Me"

*Intern Minister Dave Clements*

"And still, after all this time, the sun never says to the earth, 'You owe me.' Look what happens with a love like that, it lights the whole sky."- (Rumi). Come and explore this concept of, "How to be a Blessing." You can choose to live a meaningful life; one that'll make the world move forward, touching the lives of others in a positive way. Being a blessing to others can lift you up. When you are lifted up you lift up others as well!

### May 22 - Giving and Receiving Love

*Karen LoBracco, Jennifer May, Jeff Lang,  
Kat Holtz, Saul Flanner, and Kathy Walker*

. Come join us as we explore the definition of healthy relationships and share the voices of those who have been blessed by OWL (Our Whole Lives - a Unitarian Universalist curriculum for offering comprehensive sexuality education across the lifespan).

### May 29 - The Blessing of 150 Years

*Rev. Melissa Carvill Ziemer and  
Worship Associate Carolyn Andrews Schlemmer.*

On May 27, 1866, 19 men and women officially founded the First Universalist Church of Kent and affixed their names to a constitution of their creation. Their creation has been shaped and molded by the ones who followed them and now by us, but the core of it remains and continues to be a blessing for so many people. This morning we lift up our gratitude for the ones who came before as we celebrate our 150th anniversary.







## May Flora and Fauna

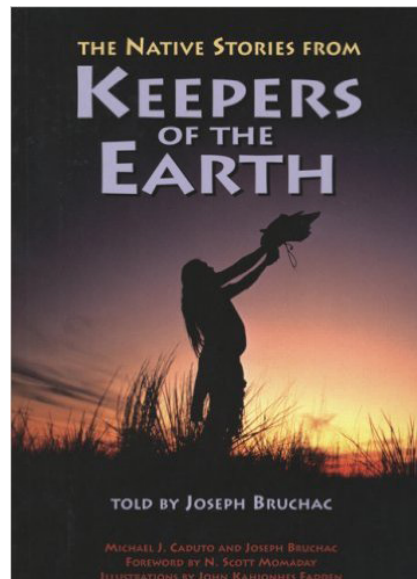
from Karen LoBracco

I am so ready for those spring flowers that are promised after the winds of March and the showers (and snow) of April! May also brings us events celebrating this congregation's continuing engagement with the life and justice affirming lifespan sexuality education program Our Whole Lives. Participants and families are celebrating the completion of the 8 week Upper Elementary program and the 27 sessions of the Junior High level. Our Whole Lives, or OWL as it is affectionately called, is grounded in a holistic view of sexuality. OWL provides accurate, age appropriate factual information while also helping participants clarify their values, build interpersonal skills, and understand the spiritual, emotional and social aspects of sexuality. I can't wait for OWL Sunday, May 22, when we will hear the voices of participants and families discussing Healthy Relationships.

P.S. This would be a good day to invite a friend to church!

## Next Year Unveiling – Coming Soon!

After the record breaking volunteer sign-up for the summer religious education World Travelers in only one week, the RE Committee is challenging you to do the same for the 2016-17 "regular" RE sessions! June 5 is RE Sunday and Sign-Up Sunday! Check out the curriculum for next year, register your children and reserve your spot on the team!



## Children's & Family Library Focus

from Dan Hayes

Another remarkable volume in our capacious collection of books on the Interdependent Web is *Keepers of the Earth*, which offers Native American stories about nature and suggests outdoor activities. One excellent recommendation is adopting a tree, caring for it, and planting a tree seed or seedling and teaching children that trees give us food, oxygen, beauty, and wood, and they provide food and shelter for animals. Children can learn that by nurturing and planting trees we can complete the cycle of giving and receiving between trees and people. Please also browse in our growing Native American collection.

## Our Whole Lives Facilitator Training

Our Whole Lives is a lifespan sexuality education program that informs and empowers participants. A training to lead either Elementary level (K-1st and 4th-6th), Junior and Senior High or Young Adult/Adult levels will be held in Columbus, OH in June. Speak with our Interim DRE Karen LoBracco to learn more if you might be interested in the attending the 3 day training.





## All Church Picnic... 1860's Style!

Please save the date - our annual church picnic is June 12. This year we're holding an old-fashioned picnic to celebrate our church's 150th anniversary. We'll gather at Plum Creek Park, in Kent, for a church service and pot-luck picnic lunch. We'll enjoy home-made root beer and ice cream. Afterwards, we'll have the opportunity to participate in games and activities of the 1800's. If you wish, you may dress in the clothing styles of the 1860's.

If you'd like to help with this event, please contact Mary Leeson.



two days, starting and finishing in Columbus Ohio, for Pelotonia 2016. This is a huge, annual cancer research fundraiser which has raised over 100,000,000.00 dollars since 2008, 100% of which goes straight to research since corporate sponsors cover their operating expenses. His has committed to raising \$2500 this year.

No amount is too small to help in a big way. Please consider donating to his ride: [pelotonia.org/ihogan](http://pelotonia.org/ihogan)

The Hogans will be training as a family with Juniper in a bike trailer. The intended training route: <https://goo.gl/maps/k1kNLGjJaiN2>

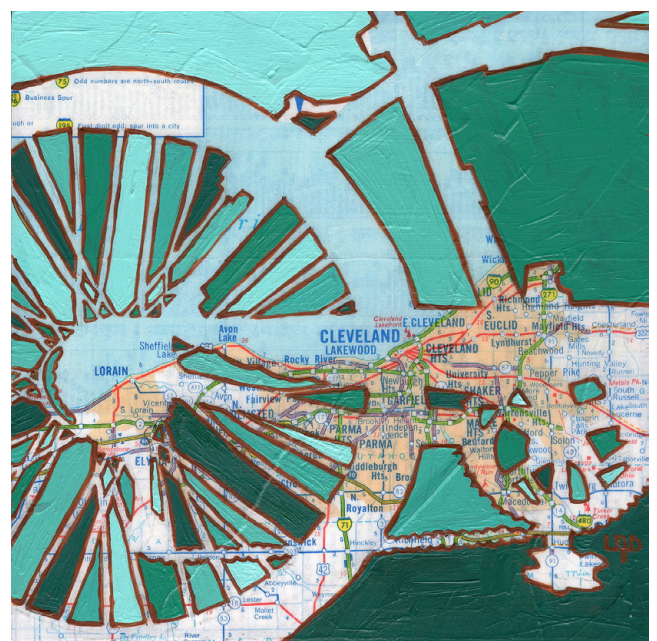
Some information about matching donations: <https://www.osu.edu/giving/guide-to-giving/matching-gifts.html>

Some information about where the money goes: <http://pelotonia.org/about/impact/>

There is a lot of work to do yet.



Todd Packer shows off his intergalactic artwork.





## Moderator's Musings

### from Kathie Slater

A celebration is in order....  
and we will have one soon!

On April 18th and 19th,  
members of the Building  
Extension Team, Board  
Trustees, Rev. Melissa Carvill-Ziemer, and our local  
architect, Doug Fuller, attended Board of Zoning

Appeals and Planning Commission meetings to  
present the plans for our new Hobbs Fellowship Hall  
and classroom/library building. These evenings were  
important markers in our journey towards expansion  
and growth.

On Monday, the 18th, Board of Zoning Appeals  
members expressed concerns about setbacks and  
amount of green space on our site. They shared  
support for the project and were convinced to allow  
the variances. Persuasive points from the UUCK  
group (Randy Leeson, Rev. Melissa, Matt Slater,  
and architect Doug Fuller) included mentioning the  
historic nature of our congregation and building,  
the careful and thorough planning for the project,  
the attention to being visually compatible with the  
historic church building, and the nature of our site.  
All three variances were granted.

The Tuesday meeting with the Planning Commission  
went equally well. Again, Doug Fuller, Rev. Melissa,  
and Randy Leeson made brief presentations as  
to the nature of the project and the congregation's  
commitment to stay in the historic West Side  
neighborhood. Planning Board members raised  
relevant points about driving patterns, green areas,  
storm water disposal, and number of windows in



the building. After discussion, most questions were  
answered and the Board voted to approve the  
plans with one or two contingencies. One of these  
unresolved areas deals with parking, but is soon to  
be resolved. Our architect Doug Fuller is continuing  
to meet with fire department officials to resolve  
questions concerning fire protection.

It is laudable to note that Planning Commission  
members cited several aspects of our plans. They  
were impressed with the attention to detail in the  
planning of our green spaces and the design for a  
play area for children. They also cited our Hogwarts  
program as great community outreach.

As for the ground breaking for our new building, the  
date has not been set...but stay tuned. Also, you  
may want to give a big UU hug to the members of  
our Building Extension Team: Lois Weir and Matt  
Slater, co-chairs, Randy Leeson, project manager,  
Mary Lou Holly, and Larry Johnson.

### FYI:

- Over 90 members have volunteered for our  
new Social Hour Teams. Thank you for your  
willingness to serve our congregation.
- At the District Assembly in Akron, delegates  
voted to dissolve the Ohio Meadville District.  
Services and events will be continued through  
CERG, our new regional association. We will  
also be working more closely with our cluster  
congregations: Wooster, Akron, Canton, and  
Youngstown.
- Informational Meeting for the Annual Meeting:  
Tuesday, May 31st. In the Sanctuary at 7pm.
- Annual Meeting, After 2nd service on June 5th.

**WORDS  
TO  
LIVE  
BY**

*"When I came here, I was looking for a community.  
Then I realized I was helping to create one."*

*~ Ryan Albright*

# the Cuyahoga River Concerts

May 28

Roger Hoover and Shivering Timbers



This month we top off our spring season with both Roger Hoover and Shivering Timbers in one fun evening. Roger Hoover's plaintive brand of arcane folk and blues seem to come from some unknown time and place. These are timeless laments and rambles of a guitarist and banjo player who performs with equal parts impassioned vocals and honest, heartfelt lyricism.

Shivering Timbers (Sarah Benn, Jayson Benn, and Daniel Kshywonis) began making music when Sarah and Jayson started singing and crafting songs for their then-infant daughter. As she grew the music began to take shape, and a band was born. In 2014 they were voted Best Musician/Band in Akron Empire, and Second Best Local Band in Akron Life Magazine. What's difficult to describe is the mood they strive to create, which can entrance and haunt you, while in the next breath, invite you into a whimsical, foot-stomping play land. Some people call it folk-rock, some Americana, others swear it's really genre-less. Listen and decide for yourself!



**Unitarian Universalist Church of Kent**

**Concert begins at 8:00 pm**

**Doors open at 7:30**

**Ticket price \$15 (purchased at the door)**

**Children 16 and under, \$5**





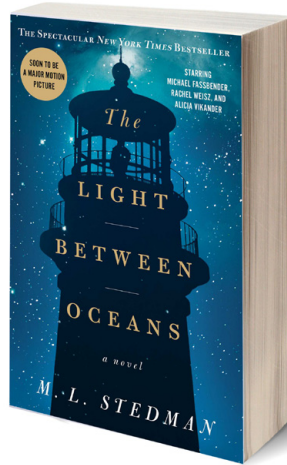
## Being Mortal

The Patricia Pownall UU Book Group will be meeting on Thursday, May 12 at 7 pm in Founder's Lounge at church. Please bring a small snack to share and bring your own beverage. This month we are reading *The Light Between Oceans* by M. L. Stedman.

After four harrowing years on the Western Front, Tom Sherbourne returns to Australia and takes a job as the lighthouse keeper on Janus Rock, nearly half a day's journey from the coast. To this isolated island, where the supply boat comes once a season, Tom brings a young, bold, and loving wife, Isabel.

Years later, after two miscarriages and one stillbirth, the grieving Isabel hears a baby's cries on the wind. A boat has washed up onshore carrying a dead man and a living baby. Tom, who keeps meticulous records and whose moral principles have withstood a horrific war, wants to report the man and infant immediately. But Isabel insists the baby is a "gift from God," and against Tom's judgment, they claim her as their own and name her Lucy. When she is two, Tom and Isabel return to the mainland and are reminded that there are other people in the world. Their choice has devastated one of them.

In June we will be reading *The Children Act* by Ian McEwan and in July we will be reading *Flapper: A Madcap Story of Sex, Style, Celebrity, and the Women Who Made America Modern* by Joshua Zeitz. If you have any questions you may contact Bonnie Harper. All are welcome.





## Simple Gifts

Our Simple Gifts program is designed to encourage everyday giving. If members and friends of the congregation continue to remember the church with regular gifts, we will be well on our way to building the kind of endowment that can help ensure our congregation's continuing health and vitality.

No gift is too small or too large. Donations can be made in celebration, in honor of someone or something, in appreciation or to note a special occasion. If you would like to participate, the blue Simple Gift envelopes can be found in the pews; please include your dedication and name so we can provide you with a donation credit. Thank you.

## PENULTIMATE

**penultimate** *adj* last but one. *noun* 1 the penult. 2 the last but one.  
ETYMOLOGY: 17c: from Latin *paene* almost + *ultimus* last.

## The Penultimate Issue

This summer, I will be relinquishing the reins of The Chalice Flame to another worthy soul. My last issue will be June 2016. I'll miss the challenge, but other obligations have pulled me in other directions. If you have an interest in document layout and design, and want to serve and feel more connected to your church community, this is a great opportunity for you. If interested, please contact Saul Flanner, [newsletter@kentuu.org](mailto:newsletter@kentuu.org), or MaryBeth, [churchoffice@kentuu.org](mailto:churchoffice@kentuu.org), for more details.





Randy Leeson hands paperwork to Planning Commission about our new Fellowship Hall.

For a complete and up-to-date calendar, please visit [www.localendar.com/public/uukent](http://www.localendar.com/public/uukent). If you are unable to access our electronic calendar, please contact the church office and we will gladly provide you with a paper copy

**the chalice flame**

NEWSLETTER  
OF THE  
UNITARIAN  
UNIVERSALIST  
CHURCH  
OF KENT

228 GOUGLER  
KENT, OH  
44240