

Procrastinators Group: Fri, Feb. 3

Our next Procrastinators Anonymous meeting is Friday, February 3, 7-10pm. The doors will be open from 7 to 9pm to enter; feel free to stay later. Come with something to do (or meet a friend who wants your help to finish something). We meet in Atherton Hall, so you can spread out your project on a table or on the floor (you may want to bring a floor cover). You can bring snacks for yourself or to share. See you there!

...Cara Duffy

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Annual ChocolateFest Combines with a Food Pantry Drive

Membership's very popular annual ChocolateFest on Sunday, February 12 will combine with helping the Palatine Township Food Pantry. As always, those who wish to share chocolate treats are welcome to do so. OR you may bring a food donation for the Palatine Township Food Pantry. OR you may bring both!

If you wish to bring a donation for the Food Pantry, go to http://www.palatinetownship.com/food_drive for a list of needed items. There will be boxes in Atherton Hall in which to place your donations.

We invite you to bring chocolate finger food to share during either coffee hour. Bring cookies, brownies, candy, or any other form of chocolate you can think of. Bring white chocolate, milk chocolate, semi-sweet chocolate, with nuts, without nuts, with peanut butter, with fruit... Please bring your goodies to the kitchen or Atherton Hall before worship service begins. ...The Membership Committee



Noteworthy Musical Outing!

Join us for *Wade in the Water*, an inspiring and jubilant concert of spirituals by Chicago A Cappella on Sunday, February 12 at 4:00 pm, Pilgrim Congregational Church in Oak Park. Tickets will be approx. \$20/person, but may be less as more sign up. We will either coordinate carpooling from Countryside or help concertgoers connect to share transportation to and from Oak Park. To sign up, email Jeff Hamrick, music@ccuu.org, by this Friday, February 3.

Singing Meditation: Feb 10, 7:30 pm

This month, Singing Meditation is being held on the SECOND Friday (February 10) and will start at 7:30 instead of 7:00.

Family Song

Please note that Family Song will not be held this month, as attendance in general has been very low. The facilitators for this new activity are soliciting more input from families regarding whether or not this is an activity that supports the musical and spiritual needs of families (and especially the children). Please stay tuned for further developments!

Publication Deadlines

The *Focus* newsletter is published monthly. Submission deadlines are Mondays at 9am. Upcoming *Focus* deadlines: Feb 27, Mar 26

Between newsletter issues, written communication is via E-Updates and the Sunday Times insert to the Order of Worship. Submission deadlines for the E-Update and the Sunday Times are Wednesdays at 9am.

Submit all articles to ccuu@ccuu.org

Minister's Muse

The Reverend Peter Morales recently wrote an article outlining his vision of the future of Unitarian Universalism. It is an interesting and complex document and would bear a larger discussion in our congregation. I encourage you to go to the UUA website and read the document. Above all, I encourage us all to think about the future of our association — the future of our faith. I think it is marvelous to have vision for the future and even as sense of a plan, but I have always had a certain wariness about forecasts and having a large blueprint, unless you are building something relatively static. The remarkable thing about Unitarian Universalism is that it has never been static. It is our greatest strength and our greatest challenge.

In order to know what our future will look like, we have to have a strong sense of what it is that we stand for, what our religion is for, what -- if I may use a word that might have a difficult charge for some but still makes sense to use -- is our "mission?" Not in the sense of what shall we do to go forth and "save the heathens" or simply how we spread our faith. Our mission is our purpose, our reason for being. For every congregation, there are at least three key reasons for being. The first is to study, celebrate, magnify, and deepen in our own lives the central tenets of our faith; those are the unity of insight that runs through all faiths, the world-shaping power of love, and the reality that revelation comes generation after generation and is never sealed. The second is to create a beloved community in which we are united and guided by those tenets as we accompany one another through the great journeys of history and mortality. The third is to take those tenets, through good work and social witness, into the world -- as did the prophets, Jesus, Muhammad, the Buddha, and the list goes on -- all while urging others to do the same, not simply to declare a message but to live it and make it real in the world.

Within those three key reasons or missions, there is a critical dimension, the unique location and character of each congregation and the communities within and around it that it exists to serve. The particular mission of each congregation rises out of that uniqueness. It is a central task of each congregation to gather to divine their mission in that sense and urge themselves to fulfill it.

Always as we seek to understand our mission and reasons for being, we are confronted by tensions: between the needs of individual lives and the needs of the congregation as a whole (Self and Group); between the inner purposes of making meaning and ethics in our own

lives and applying those to the congregation in all its workings (inner and outer); between the life of the congregation and the larger community in which it is located (microcosm and macrocosm); and between the traditions of the past and the call of the present and the future (security/tradition and flexibility/responsiveness).

The religious landscape in America has been in stress and transition for as long as there has been an American landscape. Unitarian Universalists are a notoriously reinventing people. I look forward to creating some places for us to talk about these issues and discern our way together within this congregation, in our region, and, I hope, within our movement as a whole. I have faith, certainly in this congregation and ultimately, I also have a faith in this faith, that we can -- beyond the blueprints -- survey our terrain, understand our times and their call, respond to that call, and thrive well into the future.

Caregivers Circle

This supportive group meets the 4th Wednesday of the month at 7 pm in the minister's office. It is for people who are caring for aging parents, ill partners and spouses, or children with a spectrum of challenges. It is a place to share the journey and to find encouragement, strength, and wisdom. The group is always open and always confidential. If interested, please contact Rev. Hilary at Minister@ccuu.org or 847-359-8440 ext 2.

Best Wishes

The Myren Family moved to California the beginning of January. Their presence at Countryside will be missed, and we wish them all the best in their new home! If you would like their new address, please contact the church office.

Congratulations

to Kerry and Aaron Voss and big brother Alex on the birth of Rowan Francis on December 24.

Thoughts from the President

The State of the Church

We held our first-ever 'State of the Church' Town Hall meeting last Sunday. It's important for leadership to articulate the big picture plan and dialogue with members.

The Board has listened to the congregation and heard the direction in which members yearned to move. Last year, we expressed those yearnings in new Vision and Mission statements that are guiding us to become the vibrant congregation that we ought to be. To review, our Vision statement is:

We come together as a congregation to inspire our quests for the spiritual, ethical, and meaningful in life and to advance respect, compassion, and justice in the wider world.

If we feel that we have something important to share - and we do - we'll engage with the outside community, welcome new visitors, and set high expectations for ourselves. These actions are likely to attract others to our vision and by a natural process, we will grow. Realizing this, we have been putting in place changes that will enable Countryside to grow:

1) A new Governance structure - five Ministries representing all activities of the church, rather than 25-35 separate committees/program;

2) Additional Staffing - increased hours and positions, including a new Membership Coordinator;

3) Adding another Worship service to allow room for expansion and new approaches;

4) A welcoming and comprehensive Membership approach to fellow seekers who may become our next members;

5) A new approach to Stewardship that expands that definition beyond money to include care for all areas of our congregation

We have also clarified the Aspirations of Membership that ask all members to commit (as they are able) to be a regular part of our worship community, to engage in work that addresses their spiritual quests, to engage and support the broader community, to support the work of the church with time and with treasure, and to tell others about the oasis that you have found here.

This year the Board set congregational and service themes to unify the work that we do. The theme of ENGAGEMENT asks us to become more outwardly focused, while the service theme of HUNGER focuses our efforts to address a major societal problem. This service theme has already expanded our reach as many of us have packed food for the hungry or donated coffee and cocoa

to the Palatine Food Pantry.

And guess what? Our membership has grown for the past three years. This year our annual certification to the UUA will list us as 312 members, up from 275 in 2009. We have a Vision and a Mission that IS worth sharing and others ARE finding us and joining with us to "advance respect, compassion and justice in the wider world."

The State of the Church? I'd say it's great. Take PRIDE in COUNTRYSIDE!

In love and light,

Greg Blus, prez@ccuu.org

Thank You from Palatine Food Pantry

Thank you to everyone at Countryside who generously donated coffee, tea and hot chocolate for the Palatine Township Food Pantry during the month of December. It was very much appreciated!

focus

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Fri: 9am - Noon

Evenings by appointment

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Minister Emeritus *Dr. Ruppert L. Lovely*

Community-Based Minister *Dr. C. Scot Giles*

Music Director Emeritus *John Denny*

Congregational Administrator *Laurie Lantz*

Lay Ministers

Ken Bobbe and Trudy Kleckner, Coordinators

Richard Chay Joyce Swedlund

Jane Matthews Kimberly Tilford

For assistance from our Lay or Care Ministries,
please call Ken or Trudy.

Ministry Council News

Congregational Goals

We have established the operational aspects of ministries over the last year; now we are at a milestone to go forward with exceptional programming leadership. We are building a sense of unity and coherence among the ministries and are reaching out to engage the congregation in “transformative goals” that are broader than those of each ministry or committee.

The Ministry Council and Board of Trustees have been working together to determine goals that will be spearheaded by the ministries, involving the total congregation for the next year or more. These goals are:

- **Stewardship**-Expand the concept of stewardship for the total congregation, incorporating all the aspirations of membership, including but not limited to pledges and financial contributions.

Intended outcome: The culture of the congregation changed for congregational acceptance of a broader concept of stewardship.

- **Worship** -Infuse/experience/encourage/energize a spiritual nature in all work/interactions at CCUU.

Intended outcome: Members and guests experience increased spirituality in their work and kinship here.

- **Kinship**- Have a few significant “All” congregation activities annually, ensuring broad participation.

Intended outcome: Every member attends at least one major event per year and participants feel satisfied & engaged in congregational life.

- **Community Outreach**-Plan and execute a few broad community service projects annually, involving all ministries and the whole congregation.

Intended outcome: We have a higher profile and more people in the community know about and benefit from CCUU and our mission.

- **Communication**-Plan and implement a comprehensive communication process for CCUU that incorporates inter-ministry, total congregation and outreach methods.

Intended outcome: All the current communication channels are coordinated and used to expand awareness of Countryside in the community and inform congregants of all aspects of congregational life.

More work will continue at the Ministry level and in cooperation with the Board to turn these goals into actions. We welcome any input or contributions you are personally inspired to provide about any of these. Contact Peggy Simonsen, Ministry Council chair, or any of the 10 Ministry Coordinators. You will be hearing more from us!

New Staff! Membership Coordinator

Countryside has a new Membership Coordinator - Dan Wiseman. This new position has been discussed for several years by the Board and Staff and was made possible by a grant from the Central Midwest District Chalice Lighter program. After interviews with several gifted members of the congregation, the Personnel Committee elected to hire Dan to this half-time position.

So what will Dan be doing? In general, Dan will be supporting the Kinship Ministry and helping to plan and expand beyond the work that the Membership Committee so ably does as volunteers. The primary focus of Dan’s work will be to help develop processes and programs to truly engage and integrate members and visitors into the life of this vibrant church community.

It will take a while before specific short-term and long-term projects emerge, but feel free to talk with Dan about your membership experiences and suggestions or ways that you would like to help. Dan is committed to continuing our tradition as a friendly and welcoming congregation for those seeking spiritual guidance and social involvement. He’ll be working out of the church office and will also be a visible and active presence on Sunday mornings - supporting greeters and getting to know better our many current and future members.

For the record, Dan has been a CCUU member for almost 15 years and has been involved in a variety of leadership roles. Most recently, he was co-coordinator of the Study Ministry and led the Adult Faith Development Council. Dan has been a District consultant for more than 10 years, working with over 40 different congregations. The wealth of experience he brings to this role also includes his organizational development work with United Airlines, the consulting business he founded with his wife Sharon, and his continuing work teaching leadership classes at Dominican University and the Illinois Institute of Art.

You can email Dan directly - membership@ccuu.org. Please welcome him to this exciting new opportunity!

Worship Ministry

Upcoming Worship Services

Unless otherwise noted, Sunday services are at 9:15 and 10:45 am. Childcare and Religious Education classes are held during both services.

Feb 5 A Dream of Loaves and Fishes

Rev. Jean S. Darling

Young people in grades 2-7 attend the beginning of the service with their family.

In this, Black History Month, we remember that Martin Luther King, Jr. was embarking on a wider campaign at the time of his death, a campaign for economic justice that transcended lines of ethnicity and race. We dream of a time of justice when we share the abundance among all, when we are not just “giving a man a fish” but making it possible for people to learn to fish and making sure everyone has a “net” - access to what they need to succeed.

Rev. Jean Siegfried Darling was raised Unitarian Universalist in Madison, Wisconsin, and ordained UU. Since 2007, Jean has been pastor of the Peoples Church of Chicago, a dual UU and United Church of Christ affiliated congregation in a large historic facility. Peoples Church houses a homeless shelter and runs a free lunch program four days a week called 2 Li'l Fishes, to which Countryside Church UU made an Outreach Grant in December.

Feb 12 Community Ministry Sunday: Teardrops of Amber

Rev. Dr. C. Scot Giles

Young people in grades 2-7 attend the beginning of the service with their family.

Our Affiliated Community Minister, who is also the President of the UU Society for Community Ministries, will lead us in this year's Community Ministry Sunday. He will explore how we can learn to empower our positive memories so that they become a way to enhance our mood and our spirituality.

Feb 19 Seven Principles Series: Inherent Worth & Dignity 1st Principle: Inherent Worth & Dignity

Rev. Hilary L. Krivchenia

Young people in grades 2-7 attend the beginning of the service with their family.

Share the Plate: Half of the cash collected in the offering will be donated to the Midwest Council for Children with Disabilities, founded in 1997 to provide financial assistance to children challenged physically, developmentally, or cognitively. MCCD provides families of these children the means to pursue medical treatments and therapies that are not covered by health insurance.

Feb 26 Senior High Youth Service

Sr High Youth Group

Young people in grades 2 and above attend the full service with their family.

Mar 4 Seven Principles Series

Rev. Hilary L. Krivchenia

2nd Principle: Justice, Equity & Compassion in Human Relations

Young people in grades 2-7 attend the beginning of the service with their family.

Meet the Minister

Once a month, visitors and new folks with questions about Countryside Church and Unitarian Universalism are invited to meet briefly with Rev. Hilary in the Sanctuary at Noon. Upcoming dates are: Feb 19, Mar 18

Church of the Larger Fellowship

Can't get enough of Unitarian Universalism? The Church of the Larger Fellowship (CLF), a unique congregation without walls, offers UU resources 24/7. Come explore, read, and listen. You're just a click away!

www.QuestForMeaning.org.

Sunday Morning Help Needed

Please check the kitchen door and the coffee window door (you pass it in the coffee line - just past the used bookshelf) and sign up to assist with Sanctuary sound or greet or usher or make coffee. These are easy jobs, which are vital to the success of everyone's Sunday morning experience. Directions and assistance are provided. Need more info? Please contact:

- Ushers: contact Kristin & Mark Huston,
- Audio Help: Jeff Phillips
- Greeters: contact Siri Laurin
- Coffee: contact the church office

Study Ministry News

Soup Lunch, February 5

The Coming of Age class invites you to a Soup Lunch on Sunday, February 5 at 11:45 am in Atherton Hall. Suggested donations: \$8/adult; \$4/child; or \$25/family. All proceeds support the Coming of Age trip to Boston in June.

UU 102

Sun., Feb. 5, Noon to 2 pm, classroom 1

We invite newer members, visitors and friends to grab some soup and join us for this brief introduction to Unitarian Universalism. We'll learn a little UU history and explore the perennial and current challenges to and the current state of UU'ism. There will also be time for questions and sharing. This workshop will be facilitated by Rev. Krivchenia and Colleen Vahey, Director of Religious Education.

Faith Like a River

Thursdays, Feb 9 & 23, Mar 8 & 22, 7 - 9 pm

This four-session class will explore the dynamic course of Unitarian, Universalist, and Unitarian Universalist (UU) history - the people, ideas, and movements that shape our faith heritage. We invite participants to place themselves into our history and consider its legacies. What lessons do the stories of our history teach that can help us live more faithfully in the present? What lessons does history offer about living in the future? This class will be facilitated by Rev. Krivchenia and Colleen Vahey, Director of Religious Education.

A Journey of Mind and Spirit

Feb. 29, Mar. 14 & 28, Apr. 11 & 25 & May 9

This six-session workshop on Wednesday evenings is a gathering for women seeking understanding of the divine, sacred, meaningful or holy in their lives. While paths may differ, the sharing with, listening to, and learning from one another will benefit each woman and enrich her journey. Even though individual pursuit is the primary purpose of the workshop, we will also have the opportunity to discover and explore commonalities in our spirituality and in the language of our beliefs. Cathleen Chay will facilitate. We need a minimum of 8 participants to hold the workshop. Please register by February 19 by contacting Cathleen Chay or the church office.

Thank you!

Thanks to everyone who donated milk and juice containers to RE! Young people turned these containers into beautiful birdfeeders, as part of their Faith-in-Action learning on January 29. Thanks!

Great Backyard Bird Count

February 18, 1-3pm

During this month's Faith-in-Action young people in Grades 2-7 learned about *The Great Backyard Bird Count*. This annual event connects bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of birds all across the continent. We invite everyone ages 4 and older to join Citizens for Conversation on Saturday, Feb. 18, 1-3pm, at the Crabtree Nature Center, 3 Stover Road, Barrington. Class size is limited; register by Feb 11. Go to www.citizensforconservation.org/youth-education or call CFC at 847-382-SAVE (7283) for more info.

Kundalini Yoga

Tuesdays, 7-8 pm, Rm 9/10

This class is offered weekly. Kundalini Yoga is a physical and meditative discipline that combines postures, breath, music, and chanting. No previous yoga experience necessary. Please bring a yoga mat and blanket. Questions? Contact Jessica Gardner-Iry.

Project Happiness Film Screening

On Friday, March 23 at 7:00pm, Countryside will host a screening of the new film *Project Happiness*. The film follows groups of high school students from three continents on a quest to understand the nature of lasting happiness. The teens engage in conversations with cultural icons George Lucas & Richard Gere and groundbreaking neuroscientist Richard Davidson. The youth ultimately meet face to face in India to prepare for a special meeting with the Dalai Lama. What they discover uncovers the potential for happiness in us all. The producer of the film and founder of Project Happiness, Randy Taran, will be on-site for discussion after the film. This film is great for all youth and adults (age 12 & up). Suggested donation \$5-10, pay as you are able. Hope to see you there!

Journeys Retreat: May 4-5

The "Project Happiness" film is also a great prelude to our annual Journeys retreat. Mark your calendars and plan to join us on the beautiful campus of the University of St. Mary of the Lake in Mundelein for our annual adult faith development retreat. We will explore applying the principles of positive psychology to our lives and enjoy a weekend of fellowship and learning. More details to come.

20-30 Somethings

Sundays, 12:15-1:30pm, Room 4

This is a place for diverse people of a similar age to come together for fellowship, fun, and growth. We meet weekly in Room 4. Childcare is available. If you are in your 20s or 30s, please join us!

More Study Ministry News

Movies with Meaning: I AM

Friday, February 10, 7:00 pm

Adult Faith Development invites you to view *I AM* on Friday, February 10 at 7 pm in Atherton Hall. This documentary is the story of a successful Hollywood director, Tom Shadyac (Ace Ventura, Nutty Professor), who experienced a life threatening head injury, and his ensuing journey to try and answer two very basic questions: "What's wrong with our world?" and "What can we do about it?" Tom visits with some of today's great minds, including authors, poets, teachers, religious leaders and scientists searching for the fundamental endemic problem that causes all of the other problems, while simultaneously reflecting on his own life choices of excess, greed and eventual healing. Tom says, "We started out by asking what's wrong with the world, and ended up discovering what's right with it." This is a very positive, uplifting film. Please join us for the movie and discussion afterward.

Ubuntu Immigration Project

I am because of you. You are because of me.

Ubuntu is an African term used as a mutual greeting in some places to acknowledge one another. It has various interpretations, all of which speak to our common humanity and interconnectedness. A person with Ubuntu is open and available to others, desiring to live in relationship, and realizes that there is a greater whole and that we each are diminished when others suffer, are humiliated, tortured, oppressed, or excluded. Ubuntu resonates deeply with our UU principles.

In the works for 2012 are a common read and discussion of "The Death of Josseline," cultural outings, an immigration-related film series, and more. Join us as we learn about immigrant issues and build relationships in the community to work together for a better life for all. Contact Melanie Schikore for more information.

Ubuntu Cultural Outing - Sat, Feb 18, 8 pm

Join fellow Countrysiders for an outing to see *Home/Land*, the newest work of the Albany Park Theater Project, on February 18. *Home/Land* touches on themes of immigration and was written from true stories and experiences collected by this multi-ethnic youth ensemble. For more info, go to www.aptpchicago.org/whats-on. The ticket price is \$20 per person. Based on interest, we can coordinate carpooling and/or a shared dinner prior to the show. Space is limited. To sign up, contact Melanie Schikore or Nancy Cowger or send an e-mail to ccubuntu-theatertickets@yahoo.com.

QiGong Class

Sat., Feb. 4, 9:30 am

Beginning Sat, Feb 4, Emmett Sylvester will offer a weekly Qigong class, 9:30-11 am, here at Countryside. The only thing you need to bring is an open heart and mind! Discover you natural ability to heal yourself and others. Experience slow gentle body movements to remove the blockages in your body and guided meditation to open your heart with unconditional love-kindness-forgiveness to heal yourself and others (emotionally-physically-mentally-spiritually)! Qi (energy) Gong (transformation)! Qigong is not a Religion.

Open Forum Discussion

Forum meets on Sundays to discuss "the issues of the day" while respectfully welcoming different perspectives. We meet in Room 6 at 9 am for socializing and discuss the day's topic from 9:15-10:15 am. We welcome diverse points of view!

- Feb 5: Is Marriage for White People?
- Feb 12: FOIA - Extracting Truth from Government
- Feb 19: Justice and the Law
- Feb 26: Election Reform
- Mar 4: Cyber-bullying and Digital Citizenship
- Mar 11: New Year, New defense bil - who does it defend?
- Mar 18: LGBT and Women in the Military - The End of Don't Ask, Don't Tell
- Mar 25: Women and War: Perceptions and Reality

For more information and to be emailed suggested readings, contact Vid Axel. Readings are always gently recommended, not required. Please join the discussion regardless of whether you happen to read them.

Book Discussions

Last Mondays Book Group

Please join us on February 27 at 7 pm in the Stokes Room to discuss *Major Pettigrew's Last Stand* by Helen Simonson.

UUA Common Read

Mark your calendar and join the two Countryside book groups on Sunday, March 4, 6:30 pm, in Atherton Hall to discuss *Acts of Faith* by Eboo Patel. More details to come.

Exploring Our Motivation Class POSTPONED

Rem is postponing this class until the fall.

Service Ministry

Social Action Committee (SAC) Update 2011-2012 Share-the-Plate

Once or twice a month, we donate half of the cash collected in the offering to charitable organizations that were nominated by the congregation and selected by the Social Action Committee last spring. So far this fiscal year, the congregation has donated a total of \$3,660 through the “share-the-plate” offerings:

Jul 17	Upwardly Global	\$ 142
Jul 31	Save-A-Pet	\$ 94
Aug 28	Palatine Township Food Pantry	\$ 394
Sep 18	Minister’s Discretionary Fund	\$ 387
Oct 16	Trinity Services	\$ 607
Oct 30	Handmade Afghans Project (HAP)	\$ 216
Nov 13	Feed My Starving Children	\$ 340
Nov 20	Palatine Township Holiday Gift Prog	\$ 301
Dec 18	Women’s Global Education Project	\$ 484
Jan 15	Flint Creek Wildlife Rehab	\$ 306
Jan 29	The Citizens Foundation, USA	\$ 389

In addition, our Christmas Eve offering went to the Minister’s Discretionary Fund, which is used by Rev. Krivchenia to help those in need in our congregation and community; it totaled \$1,945.

Upcoming Share-the-Plate collections will be:

Feb 19	Midwest Council for Children with Disabilities
Mar 18	UU Service Ctte Justice Sunday
Apr 15	Citizens for Conservation in Barrington
Apr 29	Minister’s Discretionary Fund
May 20	Palatine Township Apple Tree Campaign
Jun 17	Equality Illinois Education Project

Guest at Your Table

Thank you to all who participated in the UU Service Committee’s Guest at Your Table program. A total of \$739.13 was raised and sent to the UUSC.

Thank you, one and all, for your generosity!

Living the Welcoming Congregation Standing on the Side of Love....Stories

Beginning this month, the Living the Welcoming Congregation committee offers love stories of all kinds to inspire, comfort, and remind us of the myriad ways love shows itself in our world. May we all continue to find and create love in our continuing efforts to be a safe and welcoming space for all in our community.

Agape, the Greek word for love loosely translated as “God is love”, speaks to love that is pure and ideal, unmarred by human emotions and personality. Love that is God-like is unconditional and unwavering; regardless of the recipient’s behavior, choices or appearance, Agape cloaks the beloved in never-ending nurturing light. Some theists report feeling this love in their relationship with their God. Similarly, people in recovery speak of their Higher Power’s ability to “love them into wholeness.” The power of nature, art and science can remind us of our connection to the Universe and the creative energy that fuels all life.

If you have an exceptional love story that you would like to share with the congregation, please send it to Sue De Luca for inclusion in a future *Focus*.

PFLAG Palatine

All are invited to attend PFLAG meetings held here at Countryside on the third Tuesday of each month, 7-9 pm in room # 2.

On February 20, Caroline Staerk of Equality Illinois will speak on how to be an Ally.

Foundations Ministry

New Coffee Maker is Here!!

We have a brand new coffee maker, which Mark Huston installed on January 14 and which has been in use ever since. It’s REALLY easy to use! It’s very similar to our old coffee maker (except it works flawlessly). Two main differences are 1) there are no warmers to plug in; the coffee brews into thermal pots which keep the coffee hot and 2) there is a setting that allows you to brew a half-pot. Both of those features make it easier to brew coffee for a smaller group and to transport the coffee server to another location in the building.

More than half the funds for this machine were raised through the sale of Siri Laurin’s handcrafted chocolates last spring. Watch for announcement of a “kitchen training” when you can learn how to use the fabulous coffee maker and the equally fabulous and easy dishwasher.

Kinship Ministry

CCUU Summer Campout

4th Annual CCUU - Evanston UU Campout

When: June 29-July 1, 2012

Where: Kettle Moraine State Park

(South Unit-Pinewoods) Wisconsin

Cost: \$37.70 for two nights

(\$14 per night + \$9.70 registration fee)

ALL are invited - Families, Singles, Doubles - your dogs too!!

There's hiking, swimming, and a whole lot more! Together we'll enjoy campfires, and lots of great time together communing with nature and each other! All-church activities include a potluck dinner Saturday night, a beautiful outdoors Sunday Service, group hiking and more.

Kettle Moraine: "More than 22,000 acres of glacial hills, kettles, lakes, prairie restoration sites, pine woods and hardwood forests can be found in the Southern Unit, making this a popular area for a wide variety of visitors. The 3,500-acre Scuppernong River Habitat Area is the largest wet prairie east of the Mississippi River."

We hope EVERYONE is interested...

If you are, pick up a registration form at the RE Welcome Table (north end of the main hallway) or at the Kinship or Study Ministry Tables in Atherton Hall. Complete the form and return it with payment by March 18! Payment in full is required; the \$37.70 covers 2 nights of camping (\$14/night) as well as the \$9.70 reservation fee. Upon arrival, there is a \$10/day vehicle sticker fee as well. We really need to send in request forms as quickly as possible as reservations are limited and are on a first come-first served basis.

Questions?? Contact John or Susan Conneely.

Foundations Ministry

Mind the Storage

Just last August, we had our fabulous All-Church Work Day when so many projects were accomplished. Part of the Work Day process was de-cluttering and inventorying all the cupboards, closets, and storage spaces in the building. These spaces are getting cluttered again. PLEASE do not store items at church without first checking with the church office or with Lois Phillips, chair of the aesthetics team.

In some of the larger storage areas, you will notice yellow duct tape on the floor; these are areas which we must keep clear by order of the fire dept - do NOT put anything on those spaces!

Path to Membership Classes

It's time to sign up for the Spring Path to Membership classes! In these classes, visitors can look forward to gaining additional knowledge about Unitarian Universalism, exploring their spiritual path, and learning more about Countryside Church and how to become a member of this church. Sign up begins on Feb 12 after each service by the Kinship/Newcomers table just inside Atherton Hall.

The class sessions will be held Sundays, March 4 and 11, 1 - 4 pm. Childcare available if requested. The classes conclude with a luncheon on March 18 at Noon. We celebrate with a joining ceremony in the presence of the congregation on Sun, April 1. We look forward to your questions and your company in our Countryside community.

Speak to one of the membership representatives at the table, or contact Dan Wiseman, our Membership Coordinator, at membership@ccuu.org, who will forward questions and information to the membership committee.

We look forward to supporting you in making your decision about membership at Countryside Church!

...The Membership Committee: Dan Wiseman, Denise Sepos, Yuki Juretic, John Mosman, Siri Laurin, Kay Gredell, Peyton Bendix, Krista MacTavish, Marty Farrington, and Ed Waxler

Save the Date!

The annual Countryside Passover Seder is on Friday, April 6, this year. (That's Good Friday.) This is a dinner that includes the whole family and anyone else you care to bring. It is a Unitarian-Universalist perspective on the traditional Jewish Passover Seder. There will be more details and a sign up sheet at Church in March.

We are starting the planning and putting together a Seder Team right now. If you're willing to help in any way, we need you on the team. Please contact Carol Bobbe or the church office.

Games Night

Adults are invited to join us the 4th Friday (Feb 24) of each month at 7 pm in Atherton Hall. You may bring a game for large or small groups and a snack to share; neither is required.

Upcoming Meetings and Events

A complete calendar of all events and meetings held in the building is on the church website (www.ccuu.org) under the "Events & Rentals" heading. If your church meeting or event is not listed there, please fill out a room reservation form (available with the calendar on the website) and submit it to the church office.

Wed 2/1	7:30pm	Menzgroup	Sat 2/18	9:00am	Board-Ministry Council Retreat
Thu 2/2	6:00pm	Pride Youth (LINKS, 847-441-6191)		9:30am	QiGong Class
	6:45pm	Living Scriptures: Studying the Koran	Sun 2/19	9:00am	Forum: <i>Justice and the Law</i>
	7:00pm	Chalice Circle-1st Thurs		12:00pm	Meet the Minister
	7:30pm	Church Choir Rehearsal		12:00pm	Social Action Mtg
Fri 2/3	6:30pm	Papercraft Wkshop (Auction Item)		12:00pm	Mah Jongg group
	7:00pm	Procrastinators' Group		12:15pm	20-30 Somethings
	7:30pm	AA Women's Mtg		7pm	Zen Meditation, www.greatplainszen.org
Sat 2/4	9:30am	QiGong Class	Mon 2/20	7:00pm	PFLAG Palatine Meeting
Sun 2/5	9:00am	Forum: <i>Is Marriage for White People?</i>	Tue 2/21	10:00am	Chalice Circle-3rd Tues morn
	11:45am	Soup Lunch Fundraiser		7:00pm	Kundalini Yoga Class
	12:00pm	UU 102		7:00pm	Personnel Ctte Mtg
	12:15pm	20-30 Somethings	Wed 2/22	7:00pm	Caregivers Circle
	7pm	Zen Meditation, www.greatplainszen.org	Thu 2/23	6:00pm	Pride Youth (LINKS, 847-441-6191)
Mon 2/6	7:00pm	Living Welcoming Congregation Mtg		7:00pm	Faith Like a River
Tue 2/7	7:00pm	Kundalini Yoga Class		7:30pm	Church Choir Rehearsal
	7:00pm	Ministry Council Meeting	Fri 2/24	7:00pm	Games Night
Wed 2/8	10:00am	Chalice Circle-2nd Weds morn		7:30pm	AA Women's Mtg
	7:00pm	Chalice Circle-2nd Weds	Sat 2/25	8:30am	Zen Intro wkshop, www.greatplainszen.org
Thu 2/9	6:00pm	Pride Youth (LINKS, 847-441-6191)		9:00am	Goddesses Covenant Group
	7:00pm	Faith Like a River		9:30am	QiGong Class
	7:30pm	Amnesty International Meeting		6:30pm	Drum Circle
	7:30pm	Church Choir Rehearsal		TBA	Circle Supper
Fri 2/10	5:30pm	CCUU Trio Rehearsal	Sun 2/26	9:00am	Forum: <i>Election Reform</i>
	7:00pm	Singing Meditation		12:00pm	Nominating Ctte Mtg
	7:00pm	Chalice Circle-2nd Friday		12:15pm	20-30 Somethings
	7:00pm	AFD Movies with Meaning: I Am		1:00pm	Coming Alive program
	7:00pm	Sr High Lock-In		2:30pm	Journey Transgender Support Group
	7:30pm	AA Women's Mtg		7pm	Zen Meditation, www.greatplainszen.org
Sat 2/11	9:30am	QiGong Class	Mon 2/27	7:00pm	Last Mondays Book Discussion
Sun 2/12	9:00am	Forum: <i>Extracting Truth from Gov't</i>	Tue 2/28	7:00pm	Kundalini Yoga Class
	12:00pm	Coming of Age Meeting		7:00pm	Facilitators' Chalice Circle
	12:00pm	Nominating Ctte Mtg		7:00pm	RE Council
	12:15pm	Green Sanctuary Meeting		7:15pm	Experiencing God Covenant Group
	12:15pm	20-30 Somethings	Wed 2/29	7:00pm	Journey of Mind & Spirit wkshop
	12:15pm	Worship Ministry Meeting	Thu 3/1	6:00pm	Pride Youth (LINKS, 847-441-6191)
	2:00pm	UUSJ Task Force on Immigration		6:45pm	Living Scriptures: Studying the Koran
	2:30pm	Journey Transgender Support Group		7:00pm	Chalice Circle-1st Thurs
	7pm	Zen Meditation, www.greatplainszen.org		7:30pm	Church Choir Rehearsal
Tue 2/14	7:00pm	Kundalini Yoga Class	Fri 3/2	7:00pm	Singing Meditation
	7:00pm	Atheist, Humanist, Agnostic group		7:00pm	Procrastinators' Group
	7:00pm	Membership Ctte Mtg		7:30pm	AA Women's Mtg
	7:00pm	Women's Group	Sat 3/3	9:30am	QiGong Class
Wed 2/15	7:00pm	Board of Trustees Meeting	Sun 3/4	9:00am	Forum: <i>Cyber-bullying</i>
	7:30pm	Journey Inward		12:00pm	Coming of Age Meeting
Thu 2/16	6:00pm	Pride Youth (LINKS, 847-441-6191)		12:15pm	20-30 Somethings
	6:45pm	Living Scriptures: Studying the Koran		1:00pm	Path to Membership Class
	7:30pm	Church Choir Rehearsal		6:30pm	Book Discussion: <i>Acts of Faith</i>
Fri 2/17	7:30pm	Song Circle		7pm	Zen Meditation, www.greatplainszen.org

From the Nominating Committee

In the last article, we gave you information about the Nominating Committee, its members, and its mission to put forth a slate of officers and trustees for the Annual Congregational meeting as well as for committee vacancies.

So what do we look for? Well, it varies. We try to keep the board representative of the church as a whole and representative of current concerns. With only a limited number of board members, we try to keep a balance of abilities and a balance of interests. We are looking for people who can participate actively and communicate well within the board. So each year, we are looking for a different mix of skills, capabilities, and interests to balance out the board. It is hard for us to say what the ideal candidate looks like since it is more dependent on the current board and the state of the church. In other words, the best candidate one year may not be the following.

We are looking for people who understand themselves and others, who are able to effectively make change in congregation and volunteer communities. We are looking for people who understand leadership and governance. We are looking for people who bring spirituality to organizational effectiveness. There are some basic skills and qualifications considered:

- Dedicated involvement in church activities
- Demonstrated familiarity and commitment to church governance principles
- Good collaboration skills
- Good communication skills
- Willingness to participate
- Reasonably networked/involved with the Church to provide a representative view

Positions that we anticipate having on the slate in May 2012 include: President-Elect; five Trustees (including two eligible for re-election); three Nominating Committee Members (including one eligible for re-election); two Endowment Committee Members; Audit Committee (candidates recommended to the Board for appointment).

If you are interested in being considered or can recommend someone as a candidate, please fill out the following Nominations Form. The form can be returned to the Nominating Committee box in church office. You can also find a form on the church website and e-mail it to nominations@ccuu.org or talk to any member of the Nominating Committee for more information. Thanks for your input! Karen Epps (chair), Linda Berry, Mike Gilley, Bill Huber, Jeanie Michalec, Melanie Schikore, and Dan Yokas

Propose a CCUU Member as a Nominee

I (your name) _____ propose (name of person to be considered for nomination) _____ to be nominated for the following position at CCUU --

Circle Appropriate Position:

Board Officer:	President	Vice President	Treasurer	Secretary	Board Trustee
Audit Committee	Endowment Committee	Nominating Committee	Finance Committee		
Ministry Coordinator, please specify ministry:					
Committee Chairperson, please specify committee:					

This person to be nominated is a CCUU member and is/is not (please circle) aware of this possible nomination.

The proposed nominee has the following experience on church committee(s) or community organization(s). List name(s) and date(s) if known. _____

The proposed nominee would make a positive contribution because of the following skills, abilities, commitments, or interests: _____

Signature

Date

In the event we may need to contact you for further information, please provide your:

Telephone Number

E-Mail

Submit this form to the Nominating Committee box on the counter in the church office.

Denominational News

CMwD Winter Chalice Lighter Call

The Central Midwest District Chalice Lighter Committee is very pleased to announce our Winter Chalice Lighter Call! Your donations for the Winter Call will go to a consortium of Chicago area congregations for continuation of "Food for the Soul," a radio program featuring Chicago Unitarian Universalist ministers, recorded services and discussions on social justice issues. Rev. Brian Covell of Third Unitarian Church, Rev. Alan Taylor of Unity Temple, Oak Park and Rev. Emmy Lou Belcher, Dupage UU Church in Naperville, are working together to bring these programs to Chicago Progressive Radio.

They started a six-month pilot run of the program last March and it has resulted in almost 2,000 "hits" on the Facebook page during each of the past few months, in addition to an increasing number of listeners to the broadcast. There have also been a growing number of visitors to the three participating congregations for Sunday services who cite the broadcast as how they heard about Unitarian Universalism and the congregations.

The group sponsoring this is asking for \$12,000 to cover half the cost of the broadcasts for the next year.

(continued...)

Fourteen other Chicago congregations are planning to contribute, so the Chalice Lighter grant will keep the broadcasts going until the annual program is fully funded. For more information, visit either the radio website: www.chicagoprogressivetalk.com (under "programs" link) or their Facebook page: www.facebook.com/FoodfortheSoul.UURadio.

Our CMwD Chalice Lighter program funds growth programs in UU congregations across our five-state district. These programs include outreach/publicity, hiring new staff and increasing/improving facilities. Your donation of \$20 or more (\$10 minimum per Call to be a Chalice Lighter) to each of the three Calls throughout the year strengthens Unitarian Universalism in the Midwest. There are several options to donate - online or by check mailed to the District office, 1555 Sherman Ave Suite 345, Evanston, IL 60201. You may donate one amount per year that we will split equally among the three Calls.

Donations to this Winter Call to fund the radio Outreach program for Chicago area congregations will be accepted from now until March 15. For more info or to donate online, go to www.cmwd-uua.org.

Return Service Requested
Time-dated Material - Prompt Delivery Requested

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