



Stewardship 2016

The Stewardship Team is wrapping up this year's pledge season. This is the time when members and friends are asked to renew their commitment to CCUU by making a financial pledge to support the operating budget.

If you have already returned your pledge form for the 2016-17 church year (our fiscal year runs July 1-June 30), we *Thank You!* Your continued commitment to

supporting the good work of this Wonderful Church is greatly appreciated.

If you haven't yet submitted your 1617 pledge form, we hope that your annual pledge is just on the list of important things to do that you haven't gotten around to yet, because we need all of us to participate in, support, and widen our presence as a religiously liberal community in the Northwest Suburbs. Please put your pledge on the top of your list and consider increasing it this year. *Download a pledge form from the church website (<http://www.ccuu.org/supporting-the-mission>) and mail it to the church office TODAY.*

If there is a financial crisis that you face through job loss and you find yourself unsure about the amount or unable to pledge for the coming year, please call Rev. Hilary or Gary LaBedz (our stewardship chair). We don't just want to know numbers – we want to be sure that you are supported as you face hard economic realities.

Of course we would greatly appreciate it if everyone could consider an increase in your pledge amount. We have so much we want to do and any increase will move us closer to all of our goals.

PLEASE RESPOND NO LATER THAN THIS WEEK.

Don't Miss the Passover Seder ~ Fri, Apr 29

Registration begins this Sunday

Come to the annual Countryside Passover Seder. This is one of our major all-church events of the year. We will be taking reservations and donations on Sundays, after services from April 3 through April 24. The Seder will be held on Friday, April 29, starting at 6:00 pm. Recommended donations are: \$10 per adult, \$5 per child, or \$30 per family. Seder plates, wine & grape juice, matzo ball soup, and roasted chicken are provided. You are asked to bring a side dish or dessert to share that follows basic Jewish tradition (*see Frequently Asked Questions on page 3*).

Please contact Carol Bobbe with any questions.

Town Hall Meeting with the Board

April 10, 10 am & Noon

On Sunday, April 10, there will be Town Hall meetings after both services. Members of your Board of Trustees, as well as members of the Finance committee, will be available to answer questions about the budget for next year. We also hope to share ideas and get input from the congregation on building a long-term sustainable budget, including various options for the future of our North Property. *Read more on page 3, and please plan to attend!*

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Minister's Muse

Keeping the building locked even during meetings? Looking for budget for lobby staff? A Fire Drill? Awareness training? What's all this? I don't imagine that many of you are asking that question – but I would bet that some are. So, for those who are and those who haven't yet, let me begin to answer.

We are long overdue to take care of what many, if not most, other churches have been attending to for some time: security. *Has something happened?* Fortunately for us, nothing has seriously happened. But we are all aware of incidents around the nation where there have been truly tragic events – in congregational settings of all faiths. While the odds of such events may be low, the real assurance comes from being prepared – no matter what. We have fire extinguishers, keep insurance, wear seat belts – you know all that kind of stuff – not because we expect @#\$^& to happen, but because we want to be sure that if it did, we would be ready and able to ensure the best possible outcome. This is, in fact, long overdue. And the safety of our congregation needs to be a high priority not only for congregational leadership but for every member of the congregation. We all share responsibility because we are a community, because we joyfully include people of all ages, because we share a covenant that deepens the bonds between us, and because of our faith in and affirmation of the spirit of love.

For a few years, we had a Safety Task Force. They looked at fire, weather, natural disaster, security in the parking lot, possible crises within the building, and I am sure, more. They made recommendations, and we have responded all too slowly.

Recently, we had a situational awareness training – what was that all about? We are going to explore a number of ways for every adult in the congregation to keep a weather eye. That doesn't mean that everyone should be drifting around on high alert. On the contrary, our first role as people and being part of this congregational community is to welcome one another and everyone who comes through our doors. That means stepping outside of familiar habits on Sunday mornings and instead of hanging out nonstop with your favorite 'peeps' (and I bet you have some other peeps left over from Easter, and I'd definitely encourage you not to hang out nonstop with them), go up to and greet someone you don't know, when you see someone you haven't met before. Find out if they are new or you just haven't connected yet, find out more about what brought them here, share some about yourself and what brought and brings you here; you'll both have 'aha moments.' It can be hard to reach out, especially for shy persons. But when you have a mission – to make this a warm and welcoming place – it gets easier. And then, when you start to get to know someone new, it just gets easier and easier.

Another responsibility we all share to is to be aware of our surroundings and of unusual things. Most of the time, we engage this when we are walking down the street – and if you aren't, you might want to consider it – you use your peripheral vision, are aware of personal space, look to see if people are in trouble near by. Recently, I was out walking

(continued...)

Minister's Muse (cont'd)

on vacation in another country (frankly I still can't believe I got to do this! I haven't traveled a lot but I savor it down to the nubbin – where was I? oh yeah!), I was out walking and I saw a man lying on the ground. I was ready to run over and see what I could do and I told my companions and then I noticed that, only a few feet from this man, there was a nun standing and looking at him. I started to walk toward her, and she signaled that it was ok. I think she was telling me that an ambulance was on the way.

There will be times that someone who is not well, who is agitated or troubled is in our congregational home, and there could be a time that someone or something more challenging appears. There are many ways of responding to these possible situations: overreacting, underreacting, freezing, or calmly being able to notice, respond quickly and effectively, in the light of our values and principles. We're going to explore some ways and find a strong path, as a congregation, to be prepared.


For most of us, this will simply mean being aware of and knowing who to tell. We hope to be able to afford lobby staff for next year (not an armed security person) who can greet people during the week when our primary CCUU evening meetings happen, get people to sign in and out, and lock the building up, and who, on Sundays, would just observe as people enter the front door and depart. We also hope to have a small team of volunteers willing just to be aware during services and keep their weather eyes open.

And speaking of weather, we have inclement weather policies and a fire plan, and now we are going to schedule a drill or two so that a large number of the congregation will be knowledgeable and prepared in case of those kinds of events.

So, keep an eye out for future events. Really, this isn't a responsibility for greeters and ushers, and we probably shouldn't have begun this with our hospitality teams – just in case it was confusing about which role is more important, because our most important role is loving one another, keeping faith with one another, and welcoming the world to our doorstep. We will go forward with strong purpose and full commitment to both the safety of our congregation and the spirit of the expansive love in which we gather.

If you have questions about any of this or want to help us further organize and implement safety plans, please get in touch with Laurie Lantz, our administrator; Rev. Hilary; or our Ministry Council Chair, Sheryl Skifstad.

BE THERE OR BE **Mark Your Calendar: Annual Mtg**

 The Congregational Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, May 15 at 11:00 am. Please make sure this is on your calendar and plan to attend. The Annual Meeting is when congregation members vote on the nominated leaders and the operating budget for the upcoming church year. Mark your calendar & watch for details.

From Your Board of Trustees

Many of us act on our UU beliefs and values by giving of our time and monies to charitable organizations and causes. We are often inspired to increase our giving or donate our time when we hear of all the good that a particular organization does in the world. We don't always see our giving to our spiritual home in the same way. Maybe that is because we perceive the benefits of belonging to Countryside as being more for our personal benefit rather than for the greater good or for those in need? I would suggest that what each of us gains as a part of the community here at Countryside, as well as what we do as a congregation to make a difference in the larger community, is contributing to the greater good.

Using the same criteria as Charity Navigator, 81 cents of every \$1 you contribute to Countryside is for program expenses and directly impacts our ability to fulfill our purpose and our mission. The more generously each of us at Countryside gives of our monies and of our time, the stronger and healthier our community becomes and the more we are able to do, for each other and in the world.

Countryside is the place where many of us come to find renewal, to be re-energized, to be reminded of why we fight the good fight for a better world beyond our walls. It is the place we gather for fellowship, for support when we are struggling, for community when we are celebrating. The renewal we find here allows us to better represent our UU values when we go back out into the world.

This is the place we bring our children to find support for our efforts to raise them with the values we want them to believe in. Both the programming they participate in and the community of adults they observe and use as models will influence the people they become. What bigger impact on the world can we have than helping to shape the values of the next generation?

This is also the place where we open our doors to others. For some, Countryside is a secure and accepting place to meet. It is also a place to meet and use for sharing ideas with the larger community. A quick look at the blue insert in our Order of Worship gives an idea of the many ways our building is being used.

Our staff is committed to our congregation. Now we have a full-time DLRE, a music director, an RE assistant, and an intern to work with our minister and our administrator. They are working together and have many ideas for moving our worship and study programs forward. They are able to largely focus on our programming because we have volunteers that support them in administrative areas like personnel and finance, marketing and stewardship.

On Sunday, April 10, there will be Town Hall meetings after both services. Members of your Board of Trustees, as well as members of Finance, will be available to answer questions about the budget for next year. We also hope to share ideas and get input from the congregation on building a long-term sustainable budget, including various options for the future of our North Property.

The Ministry Council and your board have been working hard to put into concrete terms the ideas collected from the congregation and presented at the last annual meeting by the Strategic Planning committee. The progress on a Long-Term Plan for Countryside will also be shared at the town hall meetings.

Please get your pledge form in by tomorrow, March 31, and we hope to see you on April 10!

If you have questions or concerns, please reach out to any of your Board members. We want to hear from you! You can also contact the Board President directly via email, Prez@ccuu.org.



Countryside Seder Frequently Asked Questions

What is a Passover Seder?

It's a ritual banquet which includes a retelling of the Exodus. Seder refers to the order of the ritual. Passover refers to the night that the angel of death passed over Jewish homes just before the Israelites won their freedom, fled through the parted Red Sea, and escaped from Egypt. The evening service includes wine or grape juice and special foods. There are readings in English and Hebrew, and we even sing songs. Anyone who is willing will read. Once the 'service' portion is over, a meal is shared by those attending, and then another short service follows to end the Seder. While the Seder takes a while, it is a family-friendly event and is most often conducted in homes with children taking part in the reading or sharing of the story.

Why do Unitarian Universalists celebrate the Passover Seder?

As UUs, we recognize, respect, and turn for wisdom to the traditions of other religions – like Christmas and Ramadan. In this case, we are celebrating a sacred Jewish tradition. The main messages of the traditional Jewish Passover Seder are freedom and gratitude. We focus on these messages in our version of the Seder while retaining many of the traditions.

What will it be like?

You'll arrive by 6:00 PM and bring a dish to share. That dish should meet general Seder guidelines – no pork, dairy, bread, or yeast. We'll then begin our service by following a book called the Haggadah, which tells the story of the escape from Egypt. The word Haggadah means 'the telling.' Our Haggadah includes an interesting Unitarian Universalist story as well. We'll have some coloring for the children, but everyone is included in the evening. Since we will not eat for almost an hour, you might give your kids a small snack beforehand (though getting hungry is part of the tradition for many folks). During the service, we share food from the Seder plate which includes matzo, charoset, hard-boiled eggs, and oranges. Bring the whole family and your friends.

Later, at a break in the Seder, we'll serve matzo ball soup (vegetarian soup will be available) and then share a meal. We'll provide baked chicken as a main dish. You are asked to bring a side dish or dessert to complete the meal.

Once the meal is over, we'll have a brief service to complete the Seder. There will be goodie bags for the kids and they get to participate in the exciting search for the Afikomen. If you don't know what that is, join us and find out!

Peanut and Tree Nut Practices

In order to continue to be welcoming, Countryside Church is putting into place restrictions around peanuts and all tree nuts in our building. This practice reflects our deep desire to be a welcoming and safe congregation for members, friends, and visitors that have potentially life threatening allergies to peanuts or tree nuts.

Signs of an Allergic Reaction

Allergic reactions can range from mild to severe to life threatening (anaphylaxis). Mild reactions can include a skin reaction like hives, redness or swelling, upset stomach and wheezing. A severe to life threatening allergic reaction can range from difficulty breathing to shock and loss of consciousness. This life threatening reaction is defined as anaphylaxis, which means a serious allergic reaction that is rapid in onset and may cause death.

Why Can't People Just Avoid Peanuts?

While food allergies are becoming more common, tree nuts and/or peanut allergies are growing more rapidly than any other allergy. According to the CDC, over 3,000,000 people in the United States are allergic to peanuts, and peanut allergy is the most common cause of food-related anaphylaxis death. It is very difficult to control cross-contamination because allergies to peanuts can manifest through direct contact, airborne, and/or ingestion. A reaction can occur by touching a nut (contact), having the allergen enter through inhalation (airborne), and/or by eating a food item that contains nuts, even trace amounts (ingestion). Some people with nut allergies will have an allergic reaction through ingestion only, while others' reactions will be by contact, airborne, and/or ingestion. Allergic reactions can result when peanut oil/residue is left on surfaces, fingers, clothing, and someone with a nut allergy is exposed to that oil or residue. For example, if someone with a nut allergy is exposed to even a small amount of peanut or peanut oil/residue left on surfaces, a reaction can occur from this very small amount of peanut residue coming in contact. Peanut and nut residue that is oily can remain on surfaces for a long period of time.

Why are we including ALL nuts in these practices?

All nuts are included because most facilities that process nuts also process peanuts and there is a high risk of cross contamination. In addition, 30-40% of people with peanut allergies are also allergic to other tree nuts.

What about programs or events that sell items containing nuts?

- **Fair Trade:** products that contain nuts will continue to be sold because all nut items are sealed. We ask that special caution is used and that all nut products be purchased only by adults and that any nut items purchased remain sealed until you are off Countryside Church's premises.
- **Outside vendors:** We have no ability to monitor items sold at the farmer's market or by other outside vendors that sell food items at Countryside Church. We will be asking that signs are visible that nuts are contained in Atherton Hall and special cleaning requirements take place after such events.

What can you do to help with this effort?

- √ **Do not** bring any food item that contains nuts or has allergen warnings that it may contain nuts. If you are unsure, do not bring it to church.
- √ Check and recheck labels on all food.
- √ Bring snack foods that ARE peanut & tree nut safe.

What if someone brings a food item with peanuts or tree nuts?

As we transition into these practices, we realize some of us might forget. We ask that everyone work together to remind each other not to bring or serve anything with peanuts or tree nuts. If a snack or food item has nuts, we will ask that it be removed and returned to your car. If we do not know who brought the nut item, we will place the item in a labeled Ziploc bag and if no one retrieves the item, it will be discarded.

Remember that empathy and compassion are the key elements to understanding the reason behind these peanut and tree nut practices. Thank you for assisting in making Countryside Church a more welcoming and even safer place for everyone who walks through our doors.

Sunday Worship Service & Religious Education Classes are held at 9 & 11 am.
Relig. Ed. classes are held at 9am for infants thru' grade 4; at 11am, for infants thru' Sr High.
 NOTE: Announcements begin 5 minutes prior to the start of the worship service.

Worship descriptions are also on the church website: www.ccuu.org/worship-a-music/worship-schedule.html

Apr 3 at 9 & 11 am The Danger of a Single Story Rev. Hilary L. Krivchenia

Young people begin in their classrooms; it's a Faith in Action (service learning) Sunday.

Share the Plate: Half of the cash collected in the offering will be donated to the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC).

Apr 10 at 9 & 11 am Why Church? Rev. Seth Fisher, pulpit guest

Young people in grades 2 & above begin in the Sanctuary with their family; all other young people begin in classrooms.

What is the purpose of a faith community in the 21st century? Join us for worship (...and then find out why you're there!)

Rev. Seth Fisher is the former Congregational Development Minister of Peoples Church of Chicago, and most recently served as Sabbatical Minister at The Unitarian Church of Evanston. He received a Master of Divinity degree from Loyola University Chicago in 2013 and also received fellowship with the Unitarian Universalist Association in that same year. He was ordained to UU ministry in February of 2015. He is grateful for this opportunity to visit Countryside Church.

Apr 17 at 9 & 11 am All-Church Earth Day Service
Rev. Hilary L. Krivchenia & Jules Jaramillo, DLRE

This is an All-Church Service; young people attend the entire service with their families. Nursery and Chalice Children classes will be available during both services.

Child Dedications will be offered during the Earth Day Services; if you are interested in having your child dedicated, please contact Rev. Hilary or Jules by April 10.

Share the Plate: Half of the cash collected in the offering will be donated to Citizens for Conservation.

Apr 24 at 9 & 11 am The Living Exercise of Unitarian Universalism Jules Jaramillo, DLRE

Young people in grades 2 & above begin in the Sanctuary with their family; all other young people begin in classrooms.

May 1 at 9 & 11 am Plastered and Stoned: Art in Politics & Politics in Art
Rev. Hilary L. Krivchenia

Young people begin in their classrooms; it's a Faith in Action (service learning) Sunday.

May 8 at 9 & 11 am Eileen Wiviott, Ministerial Intern

Share the Plate: Half of the cash collected in the offering will be donated to WINGS, Women in Need Growing Stronger

*****The 3rd Sunday in May (May 15, 2016) begins our one-service summer schedule ~ one service and religious education program at 10:00 am, through Labor Day. This is to encourage the greatest participation in the Congregational Annual Meeting, which is held immediately following worship on the 3rd Sunday of the May.*****

Do You Want To Be A Star?

Ok, this isn't really about getting to be a star; it's about helping us put together some videos about CCUU, starting a Youtube Channel, and raising our profile online. The film quality is good enough – eventually we may get better equipment – but this is a wonderful way to capture memories, to share the things we value about CCUU and about Unitarian Universalism. In time, we will also create a series of shorts on congregational life and leadership ideas, as well introductions to the various ministries and programs of CCUU. All of these can be on our Youtube Channel and also on our website. Here are some questions to consider:

- What do you love about Children's Religious Education at CCUU?
- What are the three most important things for you about Unitarian Universalism?
- Describe a Sunday service that had a really positive impact on you.
- Tell me about a Service Project that you have taken part in, how that experience was, and how it was important to you.
- Describe how Lay Ministry or the support of the congregation and the minister helped you through a hard time.
- What event at CCUU has helped you to really feel part of the CCUU community.

If there are any that you might like to answer in a few sentences or a couple of minutes, please get in touch with Rev. Hilary to set up a time to be filmed at CCUU. Let's get visible!

From Our Director of Lifespan Religious Education

Children in Worship

You may have noticed a little more activity in worship recently. Maybe there's been more movement or the sound of sweet and sometimes distracting voices. That is because we are intentionally providing more opportunities for our smallest of congregant to gather in multigenerational worship.

Children are a vital part of our Unitarian Universalist faith and, consequently, our worship. Children help us understand our faith better, and help model our principles for us in a way we might not have otherwise imagined. There is something innocent and pure about a child's faith that we adults can all learn from. But in terms of modeling the Unitarian Universalist spirit, children can all teach us a thing or two.

They approach the world with awe and wonder. Have you ever watched a child spending an hour in a meadow picking flowers and watching bugs? With all of our liturgical preparation, hymns and readings, we would be hard pressed to recreate such an honest and a grateful spirit. Even if children don't necessarily understand that their natural sense of play and wonder is a way of giving thanks, we adults can learn much from a child's relationship to spirit.

And then, there's that other hand. This is what I call one of those Joy-Challenge situations. Sometimes, children in worship can seem like little more than a distraction. Time when the infant in the third row is fussing, for instance, or when the toddler in the row behind you is crunching his Cheerios too loudly—it can be easy to think of children as detractors from worship rather than people especially blessed and affirmed by our faith.

But adults are significant role models for children in worship. They learn stillness and reverence by seeing those around them. They take ownership of our rituals and traditions when they are exposed to them in worship. When you make these young hearts feel welcome in our faith, you help create opportunities to build lifelong Unitarian Universalists. You see, when our children are connected to their faith through worship, they are more likely to seek out a UU congregation in college after they graduate from our religious education programs. This connection creates stronger pathways to continue their faith through young adulthood and later raise their own children in our faith.

So thank you. Thank you for bringing a little pieces of yarn, a small book, or a quiet toy to share with busy hands. Thank you for sharing your hymnal, even though the child you share it with may not be able to read yet. Thank you for offering a permanent place in our faith for future generations. By doing so, I am certain you will be enriched by new energy and unexpected grace.

Love, love and more love.
Jules



Faith in Action

This Sunday, April 3, young people will learn about the efforts of Bernie's Book Bank to increase book ownership among at-risk children in Chicagoland. We will kick-off a church-wide book drive for Bernie's that will continue through May 1.

Book Drive April 3-May 1

Save your unwanted books, workbooks, and activity/coloring books. Our main focus will be to collect books for Bernie's Book Bank, which collects books for infants - 6th graders and redistributes them to Chicagoland at-risk kids to give them a start on a home library in order to increase their literacy rates. All books donated that don't fit the criteria required for Bernie's Book Bank will be distributed to other charities in need that may include our own church library, local shelters, WINGS, and the Palatine Library's book sale. Contact Cara Duffy with questions.



Journeys Retreat: May 6-7

Mindfulness and Meditation

Join us for Journeys, our annual Adult Faith Development retreat! This year's retreat will be held May 6-7 in Mundelein on the beautiful campus of University of St. Mary of the Lake. We will experience a variety of meditation techniques, including QiGong, gentle yoga, Tai Chi, walking meditation, guided meditation, mindful eating (chocolate!), meditations with sound, and much more. We will learn how to communicate mindfully, and we will end the retreat by creating a painting on canvas as we experience using creativity as a meditative practice. The programming for this retreat will be led by some of the many talented members of CCUU.

The retreat is from 6 pm on Friday, May 6 until 5 pm on Saturday, May 7. Prices for the retreat include dinner on Friday, breakfast and lunch on Saturday, and a reception with soda, beer, and wine on Friday.

Registrations are due by April 17, but don't wait too long—space is limited. Registration forms are available at church or on the church website, <http://www.ccuu.org/religious-education/adults/afd-retreats-special-events>. Contact Elizabeth Vesto, vestoe@comcast.net, with any questions. Some scholarship funds are available; contact Jules Jaramillo, DLRE@ccuu.org.

Movies with Meaning

Fri., April 8 ~ Plant This Movie

Join us at 7 pm in Atherton Hall to view and discuss this film which explores the zeitgeist of urban farming around the world. Narrated by Daryl Hannah, *Plant This Movie* shows that the urban farm movement is about growing high-quality food, and it is also about solving pressing environmental issues and knitting together fractured communities. This film aims to motivate and inspire us to be part of the solution.

Movies with Meaning is held the 2nd Friday of the month, is open to the public (invite friends!), and free (voluntary donation to help cost of film licenses).

20-30 Somethings

1st & 3rd Sundays

If you are in your 20s or 30s, please join us in classroom 4 after second service on the 1st & 3rd Sundays of the month. Childcare is available during meetings. For more info, email 2030s@ccuu.org.

Atheist-Humanist-Agnostic Group

2nd Tuesdays, 7 pm

All are welcome to join us on April 12, when we will explore the question, "At what point does freedom of religion supersede secular law?" We will review recent court decisions, such as Hobby Lobby and Kim Davis from Kentucky. We will also discuss the original Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993 (RFRA) and recent states' passages of similar laws.

Buddhist Study Group

2nd Sundays, 12:30-2 pm

Join us in the Sanctuary. Contact Melanie Terbovic for more info.

QiGong

Tuesdays, 10-11 am

Join Emmett in classroom 9/10 to experience slow, gentle body movements & guided meditation. Donations to CCUU will be accepted.

Poetry Series

2nd Wednesdays, 7 pm

Join us in the Sanctuary. Each month features poetry reading by a local published poet. On April 13, we welcome local junior high and senior high students who will share their poetry with us. Attendees are invited to read one of their poems after the featured guest's reading. If you wish to read, please submit a request in advance to Trudy Kleckner or Bernice McCarthy.

Journey Inward

3rd Wednesdays, 7 pm

Join us in Atherton Hall to explore and learn about metaphysics, spirituality, alternative healing modalities and much more. For more info, visit www.journey-inward.com.

Upcoming Book Discussions

Book Circle: Sunday, April 17, 6:15 pm

All are invited to join us in classroom 6 to discuss The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration by Isabel Wilkerson. We gather at 6:15; discussion begins at 6:30.

Last Mondays Book Group

All are invited to join us in the Stokes Room for our upcoming discussions:

Apr 25: A Man Called Ove by Fredrik Backman

May 23: A Tale for the Time Being by Ruth Ozeki

(note: in May, we are meeting the 4th Monday, as the last Monday is Memorial Day)

Child Dedications ~ April 17

One of the most important things we do as a religious community is celebrate life transitions with meaningful rituals. Child dedications are one rite-of-passage offered as a celebration of all children in our congregation. A child dedication allows parents an opportunity to express their hopes and dreams for their children and allows the congregation to rededicate themselves to the spiritual nurture of each child.

On Sunday, April 17, we will offer child dedications during the worship services for any child (infant-age 12) who has either recently joined our congregation or who has not yet had the opportunity to be dedicated. The children will be given the blessing and support of the congregation and receive a special gift. If you are interested in being part of this dedication, please contact Jules Jaramillo, DLRE@ccuu.org, or Rev. Hilary Krivchenia, RevHilaryK@ccuu.org, by April 10.

We look forward to celebrating with you!

Open Forum Discussion

Forum meets each Sunday to discuss "the issues of the day" while respectfully welcoming different perspectives. We meet in classroom 5 at 8:45 am and socialize for 15 minutes before discussing the day's topic from 9-10 am. To be added to the Forum email list to receive supporting materials for the discussions, contact Vid Axel. Upcoming *tentatively scheduled* topics are:

- Apr 3: Wheaton College Suspension of Prof who stated Muslims and Christians share the same God
- Apr 10: Drug Shortages forcing hard decisions on rationing treatments
- Apr 17: Low Wages in the U.S.
- Apr 24: Terror in Belgium
- May 1: Education Reform, part 2

World Religions Class Resumes

The goal of this course is to introduce participants to major religious traditions. The fall session focused on four Asian/Eastern religions. The spring sessions will center on the three monotheist religions and on secular humanism: Apr 6-Judaism, Apr 20-Christianity, May 4-Islam, May 18-Secular Humanism. These sessions will be led by John Camardella, who teaches World Religions at Prospect High School.

We also plan to offer a final session on Unitarian Universalism, date to be announced; this session will be led by Rev. Hilary, Jules Jaramillo, Director of Lifespan RE; and Eileen Wiviott, ministerial intern.

Each session will be two hours long and will include an experience that captures the major essence of the religion under study, a brief power point lecture with discussion, and a primary source short reading ending with reflections.

If you were not registered for the fall sessions and would like to register for the spring sessions, please email RE.Assistant@ccuu.org.



Social Action News

Next Social Action Meeting

All are welcome to join us on Sunday, April 24, 12:15 pm, in classroom 1. A light lunch will be served.

Monthly Fair Trade: Apr 17

Once/month we offer fair trade products from Equal Exchange for sale. This is your chance to stock up on chocolate, coffee, tea, cocoa, olive oil, and snacks. *Our next sale will be Sunday, April 17, after each worship service.*

PADS Meal ~ Weds., April 27

Note: This will be the last PADS dinner until October. CCUU provides dinner on the 4th Weds of the month, Oct thru' April, for the PADS shelter at the Presbyterian Church of Palatine. When the online sign-up is available, it can be reached from www.ccuu.org ~ click on 'Opportunities for Service' button on the front page of the website. For more information, contact Angelina Huntsha.

Are you a UU Advocate for Justice?

How fortunate we are to have our own statewide advocacy network, UU Advocacy Network of Illinois (UUANI). They are currently promoting several ways to put our UU values into action this spring:

- Promoting Justice, Equity and Compassion: A Responsible Budget and a Fair Tax
- Affirming Worth and Dignity [I]: Ending Unlimited Solitary Confinement
- Affirming Worth and Dignity [II] : Police Accountability Reform and Ending Lifetime Employment Bans
- Respecting the Interdependent Web : Clean Jobs

Go to <http://uu-advocacy-illinois.org> to read more about these issues and how you can take action.

Path to Membership

Apr 17 & May 1, 12:15-3 pm

This two-session class is designed for those who are seeking more information about Unitarian Universalism and Countryside Church and would like to join others in discussions about it. In the class, we share our spiritual journeys, examine the UU Seven Principles, and learn about stewardship at Countryside Church. Also, we will learn about Unitarian Universalism and Countryside Church's history and have an opportunity to meet our minister, intern, and Religious Education Director, and involved members. For those who are ready, the class is a path to membership.

The two sessions will be held on from 12:15 to 3 pm and will include a light lunch. If requested in advance, childcare will be available. So that we can plan food, room location, and supporting materials, we ask that you sign up at the Greeters' window in the narthex or send us an email. For more information, contact Kinship Ministry co-coordinator Tom MacTavish, membership@ccuu.org.

Transitions

Thurs, April 28, 10 am

The mission of the Transitions group is to provide a forum for mature adults to explore life transitions with a supportive community during daytime hours.

We meet monthly on the 4th Thursday at 10 am. The program begins about 10:15 and is followed by a potluck lunch. Bring a dish to share or if you prefer, your individual lunch. Also, if you wish, bring a friend. All are welcome. The April program will be presented by Peggy Simonsen on *Living and Learning in Paris*. In May, Janet Simmons will present the program on *Louisa May Alcott & friends*.

Great Books Discussion Group

On April 13, from 10 am to Noon, we will meet to discuss the first selection in our new short story anthology entitled *Seven Deadly Sins*, published by the Great Books Foundation. We meet the 2nd & 4th Wednesday of the month, usually in the Stokes Room. Discussions are lively and polite, and the leadership rotates among group members on a voluntary basis. On April 13, we will discuss "A Rose for Emily" by William Faulkner. Subsequent selections include works by Margaret Atwood, Flannery O'Connor, Edith Wharton, and twelve other modern authors. The cost of the book is \$20. If you would like to join us, please contact Gloria Kinney for more information.

Memoir Makers: 2nd Fridays, 10 am

Our next meeting will be on Fri., April 8 in Classroom #1. In addition to sharing any new writings by members, we will view the next lesson of Dr. Tilar Mazzeo's course, *Writing Creative Non-fiction*. We will begin a new course, *The Art of Storytelling*, on June 10. Contact Tom MacTavish or Barbara Griggs for more info.



Wild & Scenic Film Festival

Friday, April 22, 7 pm

Celebrate Earth Day with Us!

Join us on Earth Day in Atherton Hall, as Countryside hosts the *Wild & Scenic Film Festival*. We will screen several short, inspirational, and beautiful films about enjoying and preserving our natural world. We will have light refreshments and some door prizes during intermission.

This is our second year partnering with Sierra Club of Northwest Cook County for this event. There is no admission fee, but a \$5 donation is requested to cover licensing costs for the films. You may register at Eventbrite: <http://tinyurl.com/2016w-sff> (registration is not required, but helps us plan). Hope to see you there!

Sacred Heartbeat Drum Circle

Adults and teens are invited to join us the 4th Saturday of the month at 7pm in Atherton Hall for free-style drumming in a low key, peaceful, welcoming environment. No drumming experience necessary! Please bring your instrument (s); some limited hand percussion is available to share. For more info, visit www.PalatineDrumCircle.com.

Among Us

Congratulations

to Kerry and Aaron Voss and big brothers Rowan and Alex on the birth of Cora on January 17.

Change of Address

Jane Matthews will be moving April 1.

[contact info intentionally omitted for posting on church website]

Welcome, New Members!

We welcome the following new members who signed the membership book on March 6. They will be formally welcomed during an upcoming worship service, date to be announced.

Phil Goldberger & Edie Reese
Mike Jeschke
Jimel Razdan
Bobbi Viegas-Miller (Dan Miller)
Jack, Lauren

[contact info intentionally omitted for posting on church website]

Feminine Divine Women's Group

The 2nd Monday of the month (7-9 pm), we discuss "Your Spacious Self." On the last Saturday of the month, we have a monthly discussion topic. All are welcome to submit reading material for the topic a week in advance to Kathi Hillyer (kathioh@aol.com), and it will be shared with the group. For more info, contact Kathi.

UU Women's Connection

Spring Conference ~ June 3-5

The conference will be held at Pilgrim's Park, near Princeton, IL, a few miles from the I80 and I39 interchange. The theme is *Honoring Our Sacred Stories*. (Countryside Church member) Christine Organ will be the featured keynote speaker and will focus on the importance of accepting, honoring, and sharing our stories. Christine is a writer, author, and speaker who seeks to inspire, connect, and celebrate the human condition. Her book Open Boxes: the Gifts of Living a Full and Connected Life is a collection of stories about grace, wonder, and everyday miracles. Register at www.uuwomensconnection.org.

Monthly Meatless Potlucks



Sun., April 24, 5 pm

Countryside Animal Friends invites you to join them on the 4th Sunday of the month in Atherton Hall. Bring a vegan (no meat, eggs, dairy, or honey in the ingredients) dish to share that more-or-less serves 6-8. We will provide drinks, dishes, utensils. If this is your first time attending and you don't know what to bring, please just bring yourself. For more info: Sheryl Bass or Steve Combs.

Wellness Beyond Walls

Countryside Church and Wellness House in Hinsdale offer a free monthly program of deep hypnosis open to anyone in our geographical area who has or has had cancer in any form and to their caretaking or family members. The program is led by our community minister, Dr. Giles, and uses hypnotism to promote healing, emotional resilience, & comprehensive stress management. The monthly topics flyer is available across from the church office. *Space is limited. You must register by email kmitchell@wellnesshouse.org or phone 630-654-5197.*

New Methods of Giving to CCUU

If you prefer credit card or online giving to writing a check, there are a couple of new options for giving to CCUU:

Manage your giving online

Giving online is easy and allows you to make one-time or recurring contributions and to view your complete online giving history from anywhere you have access to the Internet. Simply follow these easy steps:

1. Visit the church website at www.ccuu.org
2. Click on the Donate Now button,
3. Click on the Create Profile button, then
4. Follow the onscreen instructions to create a profile and to schedule your contributions.

Make a contribution with a text message

- Simply send a text to 847-973-7344 with the amount you would like to contribute.
- Be sure to include the dollar sign before the amount. Example: \$25.
- Within a few minutes, you'll be sent a text with a link to register.
- Click on the link and enter your cardholder name and credit or debit card information.
- Once your registration is complete, you will receive a text verification and a receipt via email.
- For future giving, simply send a text with the amount you wish to give, and it will process automatically! If you have questions about giving-by-text, contact the church office for more information.

If you have questions, contact the church office for more information.

UU Summer Camps

Midwest UU Summer Assembly (MUUSA)

July 3-9

This weeklong camp in the Missouri Ozarks offers many workshops and activities for families, couples, and singles of all ages. Registration has begun. See the flyer on the "Our Denomination" bulletin board opposite the church office. For all details: muusa.org.

The Point: July 24-29

Imagine five days of UU covenant and community in a resort-like setting on the shores of Fort Gibson Lake in Oklahoma. This year's theme is *Savor and Save the World*. Go to the-pointuu.org for details or to watch a video about The Point.

Outside Groups Held at & Open to CCUU

Several outside groups use space at Countryside Church UU and are in alignment with our UU Principles and open to participation by all. There may be a participation fee or other requirements set by the group and which apply to all participants, regardless of CCUU affiliation.

Pride Youth provides a safe & confidential space for all high school youth who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT) or who are questioning their sexual orientation. Beginning April 6, they meet at CCUU on the 1st & 3rd Weds. More info at <http://angles.org/teens-young-adults/pride/social/>.

Transcend is a program of Youth Outlook which meets the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month. It is a support group focusing on gender identity and is geared towards Trans youth, for 14-20 yr olds. For more info, talk to CCUU member Kimberly Tilford or go to www.youth-outlook.org.

Journey Transgender Support Group

is for anyone 18 or over (unless accompanied by a parent) who is transgender, gender queer, androgynous, or gender questioning; meets the 2nd and 4th Sundays at 2:30 pm in classroom 5. transgender_journey-subscribe@yahoo.com

Great Plains Zen Center

GPZC sits meditation on Sundays at 7 pm and offers monthly Intro to Zen workshops (Apr 16). For more info, refer to the flyers on the "Other Religious Voices" bulletin board across from the church office or go to www.greatplainszen.org.

AA

Men's Meeting: Saturdays, 9-10 am

Women's Meeting: Fridays, 7:30 pm

Job Search Circle (JSC)

meets in Atherton Hall on Wednesdays, 9-11am. \$5/meeting. Dress code is business casual. For more info, email JSC founder Rosemary Monahan, rmonahan@improve-ization.com.

Career Communicators

A Toastmasters International Club dedicated to professional speaking. Meets in Atherton Hall the 1st & 3rd Tuesday of the month, 7-9 pm. For more info, www.careercommunicators.com.

St Hubert Job Ministry

Events are non-denominational, free, open to all occupations, and held at various member churches. See listing on the Community bulletin board across from the church office. For info, go to <http://www.sainthubert.org/ministries/job.html>.



Regional Assembly: April 29-May 1, St Paul *Early bird registration ends Mar 31*

Join other UUs from the MidAmerica Region for worship, workshops, and connection. Our three keynote presenters will share their thoughts on how UUism could be exactly what current religious explorers want from faith communities. For complete info and a link to register, please go to: <https://www.midamericauua.org/events/regional-assembly>

Be sure to check out the volunteer opportunities for a reduced rate when you register. Early bird registration goes until March 31. Conference discounted rate for a room at the hotel will be available until April 11. Final registration deadline: Fri, Apr 22. Adult, young adult, and youth registration fees include all programming and four meals.



UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

June 22-26 in Columbus Ohio Registration Now Open!

Register for General Assembly, the annual largest gathering of Unitarian

Universalists, at <http://www.uua.org/ga>. Come, listen, and learn with people all across our faith movement and beyond. The theme for GA 2016 is *Heart Land: Where Faiths Connect*. The faith world is increasingly multifaith. People are crossing borders of religion and spiritual practice to create wholeness in their lives individually and collectively. The labels—Christian, Jew, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, theist and non-theist—no longer define who or what we love, or how spirit moves in our lives. General Assembly 2016 will assemble leaders and communities of many faiths to worship together, learn from one another, and create a new vision of faith that no longer divides us, but connects us to an interdependent future that works for all.

In addition to business sessions, the GA program offers workshops & lectures, wonderful worship, and witness opportunities. Participate in the GA choir (nearly 200 singers from UU churches across the continent) under the direction of Dr. Glen Thomas Rideout from UU Congregation of Ann Arbor. The annual Ware Lecture will be given on Sat, June 25 by Krista Tippett, author of *Speaking of Faith* and host of the radio program *On Being*. There are opportunities for off-site participation if you can't make it to Columbus; see www.uua.org/ga/offsite.

Upcoming Church Meetings & Events: April

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p><i>This calendar shows upcoming Church meetings & events. All meetings and events held in the building are listed on the church website, under Events & Rentals - http://www.ccuu.org/programs-and-events/calendar. If your meeting or event is not listed, please submit a room reservation form (available in the office or on the website with the calendar) to the office.</i></p>						
Apr 3 8:45 am Open Forum 9 & 11 am Worship & RE 10am & Noon Intro to CCUU Noon 20-30 Somethings Noon Nominating Cttee Mtg 12:15pm RE Council Mtg 12:30pm Compassionate Comm.	4 7pm Cognitive Behavior 7pm Outreach Steering Council	5 10am Qigong 7pm Ministry Council 7pm Living Welcoming Congregation Mtg	6 7pm World Religions class	7 7:15pm Choir Rehearsal	8 10am Memoir Makers 7pm Movies with Meaning	9 2pm Green Sanctuary Mtg-climate action event planning
Apr 10 8:45 am Open Forum 9 & 11 am Worship & RE 10am & Noon Town Hall Mtg Noon Nominating Cttee Mtg 12:15pm Green Sanctuary Mtg 12:15pm Internship Cttee Mtg 12:30pm Buddhist Study Group	11 7pm Spacious Self	12 10am Qigong 7pm AHA Discussion 7pm Finance Cttee Mtg	13 10am Transitions Reading Group 10am Weds Chalice Circle 7pm Mary Oliver Poetry Series	14 7:15pm Choir Rehearsal	15 7pm Fri Chalice Circle	16 Circle Suppers
Apr 17 8:45 am Open Forum 9 & 11 am Worship & RE 10am & Noon Fair Trade Sale Noon Path to Membership class Noon Outreach Steering Council Noon 20-30 Somethings 12:30pm Compassionate Comm. 6:15pm Book Circle	18 9am Focus deadline	19 10am Qigong 7pm Worship Council	20 7pm Board of Trustees 7pm Journey Inward 7pm World Religions class	21 7pm Thurs Chalice Circle 7:15pm Choir Rehearsal	22 6pm Wild & Scenic Film Fest	23
Apr 24 8:45 am Open Forum 9 & 11 am Worship & RE 12:15pm Internship Cttee Mtg 12:15pm Social Action Mtg 5pm Vegan Potluck Dinner	25 7pm Last Mondays Book Discussion	26 10am Qigong 7pm Experiencing God Cov Grip	27 9:30am-5pm PADS Meal Delivery 9:30am Focus publication 10am Transitions Reading Group	28 10am Transitions 7:15pm Choir Rehearsal	29 6pm Passover Seder Apr29-May1: Regional Assembly	Apr 30 9:15am Fem. Divine 7pm Drum Circle
May 1 8:45 am Open Forum 9 & 11 am Worship & RE 10am & Noon Intro to CCUU Noon Path to Membership class 12:15pm 20-30 Somethings 12:15pm RE Council Mtg 12:30pm Compassionate Comm	May 2 7pm Outreach Steering Council	3 10am Qigong 7pm Ministry Council	4 7pm World Religions class	5 7:15pm Choir Rehearsal	6 May 6-7: Journeys AFD Retreat	May 7 10am Wellness Beyond Walls

Focus

Published by Countryside Church UU

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Ken Bobbe and Jane Matthews, Coordinators

Karen Greenland Joy Simon

Barbara Griggs Chris Smith

Kathi Hillyer Kimberly Tilford

Melanie Schikore

For assistance from Lay or Care Ministry,
please call Ken or Jane or Rev. Hilary.

Our Covenant

We unite to strengthen the bonds of kinship among all persons, to promote human dignity, and to increase reverence for life's creating, sustaining, and transforming power through worship, study, and service.

Our Vision

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.

Our Mission

Countryside is seen as the growing voice and source of liberal religion in the northwest Chicago suburbs by...

- creating a place of inclusiveness, welcome, connectedness, compassion and respect
- providing for the spiritual and intellectual growth of members of all ages
- cultivating a vital future for our congregation and community through thoughtful stewardship of our financial resources and our environment
- acting on a social conscience

Upcoming Focus Deadlines

Submit all articles by 9am to ccuu@ccuu.org

- ◆ April 18 (to be publ. Apr 27)
- ◆ May 16 (to be publ May 25)
- ◆ June 20 (to be publ Jun 29)

Between *Focus* issues, written communication is via E-Updates & the *Sunday Times* insert to the Order of Worship. Submission deadline for e-updates & *Sunday Times* is Weds at 9 am.

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