This is my first column addressing you as the President of the Board of UUCC Park Forest. I thank Bruce Swiecicki for his tenure as President, and I am inspired by his example in going forward to serve this congregation.

I’m writing this column in the shadow of the domestic terrorist attack that occurred on June 12, 2016, when a mass shooting occurred at Pulse, a gay nightclub in Orlando, Florida. At least 50 people were killed by a 29-year-old American citizen of Afghani descent who was Muslim and pledged allegiance to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant immediately before the attack. The attack is the deadliest incident of violence against LGBT people in U.S. history, and the deadliest terrorist attack in the U.S. since September 11, 2001.

When such a tragedy strikes, I choose my strongest weapon of resilience in order to keep my mental and emotional equilibrium, namely, to list in my journal three things that I am grateful for. I am grateful that the UUCC Park Forest church was one of the first churches to be an LGBT Welcoming Congregation, almost 20 years ago. Coming out to Chicago in the summer of 2013, I found the UUCC PF Church to indeed be a welcoming congregation.

The second thing I am grateful for is Rainbow Nite at UUCC Park Forest. Dave Matteson, who recently authored a book called “I Took Both Roads: Memoirs of a Bisexual Husband,” was the leader of Rainbow Nite, a social gathering for LGBT people and their allies that meets every third Friday of the month at the UUCC Park Forest gathering room. When Dave left the church because he was relocating to downtown Chicago, he left me the legacy of leading the group going forward. We had met the Friday before the attack to discuss plans for using the Rainbow Nite as a platform to reaching out to the LGBT community in the South Suburbs. After Sunday’s attack, it only gives new impetus to our efforts to light a candle in the darkness and make all LGBT who live in the South Suburbs feel like they have a place to meet in a positive, supportive atmosphere. As an example, we recently hosted a “coming-out” party for the daughter of Angela Denk, one of the members of our congregation, and I felt proud that our group was able to make the event not a traumatic one as it often is for young people, but an event to be celebrated.

And finally, the third thing I am grateful for is that, on the day after the attack, Don Bell, a frequent guest to our Rainbow Nite group, was our celebrant for the LGBT Pride service. In his sermon, which I labeled “Intersections,” he showed that, when a minority such as LGBT is attacked, we must of course do our best to comfort our own community, but we must also take the occasion to reach out in solidarity to others who are marginalized because of their identity, whether it be on the basis of race, religion, gender, social class, or any means by which the powers-that-be use to divide us and prevent us from trying to change the current system which benefits only the few. We all live in that space, of intersections between various parts of our identity, and in the next year I hope the UUCC Park Forest can help us make connections to others. In an age that witnesses violence on a level approaching the insane, it is the only sane response that can lead us out of the world we live in now.
We are continuing to distribute a member information survey

It includes a request for contact information and an interest checklist. The purpose of the survey is to correct and update member and friend information and facilitate bringing people with similar interests together.

Copies of the survey will be in the Gathering Room at UUCC; we’ll put the survey online soon. We hope to have 100% participation. If you have any questions, please contact Dan Feldt at ddfeldt@gmail.com

Ice Cream Social
July 17 (after Worship)

You know that Unitarian Universalists made many contributions to the Christmas holiday but did you know that the ice cream Sundae was invented by a UU Minister? Yup, it was!

On July 17 we will celebrate this liberal religious invention by having our post worship social hour be an ice cream social.

Bring your favorite topping to share. We will enjoy a cool treat on a Sunday/Sundae summer day.

Laurene Lambertino-Urquizo has hostas growing in her yard and wants to give them away for free. You will need to just bring a shovel & something to put them in to transport them home. For more info, call Laurene at 708-921-4136 or contact her by email (lurquizo@yahoo.com). She lives in Chicago Heights.

PULLING POP TABS FOR A PURPOSE

Across the Chicagoland area, hundreds of individuals, schools and companies are working together to collect pop tabs to benefit Ronald McDonald House Charities of Chicagoland & Northwest Indiana (RMHC-CNI). Those pop tabs are recycled by United Scrap Metal, and the charity will receive the market value of the recycled metal, plus a charitable match from United Scrap Metal.

There is now a pop top collection jar located in the kitchen at UUCC. Please bring in your pop tops to contribute to this worthwhile charity.

RonaldHouseChicago.org  630-527-3800
Meet one of our newest members:
Melinda Elliott

If you haven’t already, please welcome Melinda Elliott to UUCC! Melinda lives in Peotone and works at Governors State University teaching secondary education faculty and students to use an Educational Assessment software. She also runs accreditation reports and manages a database.

Melinda has one child, Zachary Oandasan. He's graduating from high school this May and plans to attend NIU in the fall. Melinda’s mom still lives in the house in which she grew up, in Goodenow (between Crete and Beecher). She has two younger sisters, one in Michigan and one in Schaumburg.

Melinda is a recovering Catholic, who is a fan of Pope Francis. The internet is what led her to UUCC. “I knew what kind of belief system I was looking for and found it in Unitarian Universalism.”

Melinda is a proud and active member of the Green Sanctuary. She is also an assistant to the Treasurer and helps with kitchen duty. Her greatest passion is working to abate climate change. She is an active member of the Sierra Club.

Oh, and she loves to knit.

Edgar’s Place thanks you!!

Dear Folks,
We ended our Edgar's Place season on May 14th with a magnificent show from the one and only Anne Hills. It was a spectacular end to a spectacular season of music. THANK YOU to all who attended any of our shows. I would like to recap our 2015-2016 season. Every one of our performers brought their unique styles to each concert we had. It was a joy to host all of them:

October: Claudia Schmidt
November: Harpeth Rising
December: Tricia Alexander, Diana Laffey and Alpha Stewart Jr.
February: Dean Milano & Chris Farrell with special guest Lia Nicine McCoo
March: February Sky (Susan Urban and Phil Cooper)
April: Lambert and Walz (Eric Lambert and Chris Walz)
May: Anne Hills

Thanks to all of our awesome performers! And as always, a BIG THANK YOU to our Edgar's Place volunteers: Dave Bartlett, Darlene Obeida, Elaine Moore and Kevin Glenz on sound. And a shout out to Linda Daniels, Michael Anthony and Steve Aultz and Kendra Reinschagen for stepping in to help when I was unable to be there for the March show due to a death in the family and Dave, Darlene and Kevin all had another obligation that night. You helped to make the show go on without a hitch, so thanks for that. And, a special thank you to our church office staff who helped with the flyers and other publicity: Diane O'Connor, Nancy Irons, Karin Gerson and Virginia Jackson.

~Valerie Birk
Pastoral Care: Listening Hearts

Two Listening Hearts, or members of the Lay Pastoral Care team, are on hand each month to serve your needs.

They are not acting as professional counselors, but rather a source for listening, support and resources.

Listening Hearts will soon have a ribbon on their name tags to identify them. If you do not spot one of them at church, or if you wish to talk to one of them in particular, please contact the office.

Listening Hearts schedule

July: Pat Segner & Darlene Obejda
August: Bev Feldt & Monica Regan

Men’s group will meet on Monday’s 7pm-9pm on following dates in July & August: July 18th, Aug 1st, Aug 15, & Aug 29

July 18th is the next men’s group meeting. There is no men’s group on July 4th

For more information, contact Colin Kirchner at colinkirchner@gmail.com

Forum does not meet in July and August.

(Please make note of our NEW office email address) churchadmin@uuccpf.org

FREE MOVIE NIGHT
Friday July 22nd at 7:00pm

explore the secrets behind what makes us happy

The movie “happy” takes us on a journey from the swamps of Louisiana to the slums of Kolkata in search of what makes people happy. Combining real life stories of people from around the world and interviews with the leading scientists in happiness research.

2011 - 76 min

Join in the lively discussion. Invite friends!
Free coffee, tea, and popcorn.

Unitarian Universalist Community Church
70 Sycamore Drive, Park Forest, IL
(Just east of Western, south of Steger Road)
708-481-8339 www.uuccpf.org
Rainbow Cafe
Rainbow Cafe is a social event that provides a safe and welcoming environment for single or partnered gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender adults and their allies, by creating a space where they are able to socialize outside of the usual bars. The Cafe is open every 3rd Friday of the month from 6:30-10:30 pm.

July 15th movie: Helicopter Mom
Even with good intentions and an abundance of love, parents can sometimes become smothering. Such is the case with Maggie, who decides that she would not only accept her son Lloyd as gay, she would encourage it. In fact, Maggie becomes so convinced that Lloyd is indeed gay that she "outs" him to his entire high school. Like any good "helicopter mom" Maggie hovers over every aspect of her son's life. There's just one wrench in her grand plans: Lloyd doesn't even know whether he's gay or not - and he's just asked a girl to prom!

A Moment in Balance
Yoga Classes by Karen Nielsen
Monday and Thurs
9:30am – 11am
Wednesday evenings
7:00pm – 8:30pm
No reservations needed. Drop-in fee is $10 per class and the 6th one is FREE.

The Medical Cannabis Education Association meets every month on the First Sunday at 12 noon
July 3rd: Host Kiana Hughes from the Illinois Women in Cannabis
Title: Changing the Conversation about Cannabis

Sacred Communication Workshops
July Dates: TBA
These Transformative Workshops will help you in identifying and dissolving mental and emotional blockages, learning to use your authentic voice, defining authentic friendships, and more.
For Information Call
Rev. Henrietta Byrd:
312-593-4732

Buddhist Meditation
Learn and enjoy the simple, straight-forward practice of meditation. Please join us for sitting and walking meditation in the Zen and Theravadan Buddhist traditions. This is an ongoing event led by Steve McCabe and Beverly Feldt.

When: Saturdays at 9am to 10:30am
Location: UUCC
Cost: Free Will offering, (proceeds go to UUCC)
Contact: For questions, contact Steve McCabe (708) 465-3116 or Beverly Feldt - bevfeldt@gmail.com

Love to Sing??
Join the UUCC Choir! The Choir sings on the second and fourth Sundays of each month, with rehearsals on those days at 8:30am and one weekday evening per month. No experience required. If interested email our choir director Bev Feldt at bevfeldt@gmail.com.

Dances of Universal Peace:
3rd Sunday of the month. (Sept-June)
Dances of Universal Peace are held on the 3rd Sunday of the month from 2-4pm at UUCC. We join our voices in singing sacred phrases and Divine Names from many spiritual traditions while moving in circle dances and walking meditations. For more information contact certified dance leader, Pat Segner, at 708-748-2217.

DUP will NOT meet in July!

Did you know?....
...a serving of blackberries, blueberries, or strawberries -- every day will help you load up on antioxidants, which may help prevent damage to tissues and reduce the risks of age-related illnesses. Organic blueberries and blackberries are especially antioxidant-rich. A big bonus: Berries are also tops in fiber, which helps keep cholesterol low and may even help prevent some cancers.
This substance has had a negative impact on air quality and public health in the areas where it is stored, and despite a tremendous pushback from Chicago residents and Mayor Rahm Emanuel, KCBX Terminals, a subsidiary of the Koch Brothers-owned Koch Industries, put up a big fight. However, BP has pledged to stop storing petcoke in Illinois and the waste byproduct is heading to other states now. According to Josh Mogerman of the Natural Resources Defense Council, KCBX's South Site is permitted to handle 11,000,000 tons of petcoke over a year.

http://chicago.curbed.com/2015/7/15/9940410/petcoke-piles-map

I gave a sermon in the BUUF (Berean County Unitarian Universalist Fellowship) in Michigan titled the Devil’s Excrement. The term as I am using it, comes from a South American that helped to start OPEC, the united group to help set production of oil prices.

How does this tie in the devil's excrement? Juan Pablo Pérez Alfonso, a founder of OPEC, complained in 1975: “I call petroleum the devil's excrement. It brings trouble...Look at this locura—waste, corruption, consumption, our public services falling apart. And debt - debt we shall have for years.”

English words for the Spanish word locura. amok · amuck · craziness · folly · insanity · lunacy · madness · piece of folly · wildness …

The petcoke in Illinois will move to another location in the United States. What community will get this nasty stuff next? This is part of our driving habits in the United States.
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<td>9:30am Yoga</td>
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**July 10th:** Don’t miss our chili fundraiser at 11:30am  
**July 17th:** Have some fun at our ice cream sundae social also at 11:30am  
**July 30th: 1-6pm** Natural Woman Seminar by Oye Scott - more info coming soon
Church Information
70 Sycamore Drive
Park Forest, IL  60466
PHONE:  708-481-5339
E-Mail:  churchadmin@uuccpf.org
Web:  www.uuccpf.org

Newsletter deadline is always the 20th of every month
This newsletter is designed and published by Diane O'Connor
*You can help save a tree and a stamp by simply picking up your newsletter or receiving it electronically via email.

Visit us on the web @ www.uuccpf.org