



UCCCPF Community News

Unitarian Universalist Community Church

December, 2011

Park Forest, IL



The President's Column

Christmas is not so much a matter of explanation and interpretation as it is a mood and a feeling. It is a time in the cycle of the year set apart by hope and fellowship and generosity. Christmas is the season of the heart. ~Gordon B. McKeeman

No matter what your religious tradition, Love is the star of Christmas. And Love can be a way of life not just a season. Sufis having a saying, "Ishq Al-lah Mah-bud-lil lah." God is Love, Lover and Beloved. If the word God displeases, substitute universe. A Unitarian minister once told me Love is a conscious decision. Make a conscious decision to show more Love this Christmas season. Sometimes you can demonstrate Love by silence and listening rather than rushing to judgment. At other times Love requires action and doing as in Christmas greetings, celebrations, presents, acts of kindness to others and charitable giving. Mentoring of others, giving of our time and talents in a non-competitive way is an act of Love. Sharing at all levels, building communities beyond our families are ways of dispensing Love. Smiling with joy, and hope and believing in the good things in the world, shows Love. Appreciation of the miracle of new life and the abundance of nature sends more Love out to others. By telling our stories and building circles of fellowship, thinking of others rather than our own personal desires, we put forth more Love in our life.

May the Blessing of a Christmas filled with Love be yours,
Pat

*Go into the world and bid others to follow the star:
Tell them the star means wisdom
Tell them the star means kindness
Tell them the star means understanding
Tell them the star means tolerance
Tell them the star means sacrifice
Tell them the star leads to a vision of a fairer world,
Tell them the star shines in the heavens and in their
own hearts and if they will follow the light--
their own light --they will bring peace and joy
to others and find it themselves.* ~author unknown





"Guest At Your Table"

Last Sunday many of our RE students took home a "Guest at Your Table" donation box. The boxes, an annual UU tradition, feature people that the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) has worked with recently. At every meal, families honor their "guests" by putting money in the box.

Here are some of these guests:

Chrisantus is the director of the SoilFarm Multi-Culture Group (SFMG), a UUSC partner in Kenya. He has helped protect water resources through Hope in Crops, a groundbreaking youth education and training program that teaches children in 30 local schools about protecting the environment, planting trees, growing crops, and raising bees. **Chrisantus works to empower his local community while being mindful of their larger impact. UUSC is proud to partner with someone who upholds and respects the interdependent web of existence.**

Dalia is a youth leader and human-rights activist in Egypt. She is shattering barriers to empower a generation of Egyptians who are experiencing democracy for the first time. Inspired by Martin Luther King Jr., Dalia worked with UUSC to translate a comic book about the Montgomery bus boycott into Arabic and train youth activists in nonviolent protest. Following the 2011 nonviolent revolution, she is working to educate voters throughout Egypt, many of whom have never voted in an election, and encourage them to take part in their budding democracy. **Dalia believes that everyone should have a voice and a choice in democratic society.**

Maria is a leader for workers' rights with the Northwest Arkansas Workers' Justice Center (NWAJWC), making a difference for both undocumented and legal immigrant workers. When she was 16, Maria moved from Mexico to California, where she helped her family by working in the lettuce and strawberry fields. Many companies were underpaying, abusing, and threatening undocumented workers. Maria saw and experienced that — and took action by starting a program to help immigrant workers. Now she works with NWAJWC, a UUSC partner, to improve conditions for low-wage workers. **Maria works with women at NWAJWC as peers, in similar spirit to UUSC's eye-to-eye partnership model. Like you and UUSC, she strives to honor the inherent worth and dignity of every person.**

Please take home a "Guest at Your Table" box and bring them back on January 6th. They're available in the Gathering Room. Remember, these people and many like them are living the UU Principles every day.



FORUM

11:30 AM

December 4: Community Sunday/No Forum

December 11: Care of the Earth: A group of 4 very active/interested forum members will be holding a round table discussion/forum with a moderator, discussing the most recent updates and some controversial topics. Questions are welcome afterwards from all person attending.

December 18: Michelle Stark: Michelle is founder and president of Matanya’s Hope. She founded the 501(c)(3) organization in 2005 after returning from a [safari to Kenya](#), East Africa. Stark states, “The visit to Kenya changed my life. I never knew how I would serve this world, but since I was a little girl, I prayed that there would be a way for God to use me. When I felt the calling to found Matanya’s Hope, I knew that my prayers had been answered.”

December 25: Christmas Day/No Service

Sunday Worship Schedule

10:00 AM

December 4:

“New World Coming”

By Yielbonzie Charles Johnson with a reflection by Carol Hechenberger

December 11:

“The Magic Carpet of Power”

Why is power so seductive? How do the UU principles address the love of power?

By Monica Regan

December 18:

RE Holiday Event

December 24: 5PM

“Christmas Eve Candle Lighting Service”

By Rev. Yielbonzie Charles Johnson and Chris Ussery

December 25:

No Service

Happy Holidays

Jazz in the Afternoon CD

If you would like a CD of the latest Jazz in the Afternoon concert here at UU, please contact our pianist, Chris Ussery. They are \$10 each.

Care of the Earth Forum Second Sunday of each Month

Although we have covered many topics in the last year and a half, there are others not yet broached, and require our attention. One such is sustainable food production. We are past seven billion and still growing and in dire need of more and better and more efficient food production. It is just as related to power, energy, and conservation as other topics we have discussed. I am looking for volunteers to take one or two Forums and help all of us learn about sustainably increasing food production in Park Forest, the U.S., and the world. Do it solo or use a team approach. Please help. Pick one or two Care of the Earth forum dates for next semester. So far, only January is full. See or call Fen Taylor.

Rev. Yielbonzie Charles Johnson
Minister

Pat Segner
President

John Hurtubise
Vice-President

Richard Treptow
Treasurer

Diane O’Connor
Office Administrator

Around UUCCPF



WEDNESDAY MORNING COVENANT GROUP

We invite new conversation and socializing after the group. We meet on 2nd and 4th Wednesdays each month from 10am to Noon. Bring a bag lunch for sharing and conversation.

December 14: Jokes and Riddles (and our traditional holiday potluck)

December 28: No meeting due to Holiday

FRIDAY COVENANT GROUP

We invite everyone to join us for sharing and discussion on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of every month from 7-9 p.m. During the first hour we go around our circle, each having the opportunity to talk about what is happening in our lives. The second hour we discuss a topic chosen by our group. Come join us!

December 9: Pet Tales

December 23: No meeting due to Holiday



UUCCPF Social Issues
Free Movie & Discussion

No Movie Night in December

Happy Holidays



Rainbow Café

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 Café is open every **1st Saturday of the month from 7:30-9:30 pm. For more info contact Dave Matteson. 708-672-8837 or 708-408-1421**

Next Café: December 5



A MOMENT IN BALANCE

Yoga Classes by Karen Nielsen
Monday and Thurs
9:30am – 11am
Wednesday evenings
7:30pm – 9pm

No reservations needed. Drop in fee is \$10 per class and the 6th one is FREE. Call (708) 755-3577 for information



Drum Circle

3rd Friday of each month: 7-9pm

Come enjoy the soothing therapeutic effect of our open drum circle. Drumming is fun and good for you. Connect with the Spirit in a way that can't be described in words. Come out and get your rhythm on! Reconnect with the Pulse of the Universe! The circle is "zero level," requiring no experience. Please bring a drum if you have one. We will have a small selection of community drums just in case.

A \$10 love offering is requested. We plan to add drums with the proceeds of the offerings. Please be generous!

For more information email Andy at: DrumUUC@yaho.com

Dances of Universal Peace...



are Circle, Meditative, Prayerful dances to the mantras from all World Religions. They originated with Murshid Samuel Lewis, a Sufi teacher, in San Francisco in the late 1960's. We meet from 4pm-6pm at UUC. Nancy Pfalscraft, a certified D.U.P. teacher, is our primary leader.

**Next dance: December 18, 2011
For more info call: Pat Segner 748-2217**



Choir Rehearsals

Please join us for choir practices Tuesday evenings at 7:30

Vipassana Meditation


Vipassana meditation is now being held in the gathering room every 2nd and 4th Monday of every month from 7:30 - 8:30p.m.

Vipassana, or "Insight Meditation" means "to see things as they really are." For more information, contact: Diane between 10am & 2pm at 708-481-5339.

From Kandye

If you are the last person in the church please make sure that the front AND back door is locked and lights are turned off. The kitchen door and storeroom door need to be left open for air flow because of the heat from the freezer and refrigerator.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 9:30am Yoga	2 6:30pm Family First Friday	3 7:30pm Rainbow Café
4 10am Worship/RE 11:30am Community Sunday	5 9:30am Yoga	6 7:30pm Choir practice	7 7:30pm Yoga	8 9:30am Yoga	9 7pm Covenant Group	10
11 10am Worship/RE 11:30am Forum	12 9:30am Yoga 7:30pm Meditation	13 7:30pm Convener Meeting 7:30pm Choir practice	14 10am Covenant 7:30pm Yoga	15 9:30am Yoga	16 7pm Drumming	17 10am Let's Make Soup/ Green Sanctuary Commit- tee Meeting
18 10am Worship/RE (RE Holiday Event) 11:30am Forum 11:30am Green Sanctuary Fund Raiser 4pm Dances of Universal Peace	19 9:30am Yoga	20 7pm Board Meeting 7:30pm Choir practice	21 7:30pm Yoga	22 9:30am Yoga 6pm-9pm Candlelight Labyrinth	23 6pm Boy Scouts	24 5pm Christmas Eve Service 7pm No Movie Night due to the Holiday
25 Christmas Day— No Service 	26 9:30am Yoga 7:30 Meditation	27 7:30pm Choir practice	28 7:30pm Yoga	29 9:30am Yoga	30	31

First Friday Update

We are now open on 1st Fridays to members and friends for adult games as well as our family games. Adults will have their own tables to play cards or board games. Come and enjoy the fun!

Green Sanctuary Committee

A Rally in Washington D.C.: Stopping the Tar Sands Pipeline

Written by Colin Kirchner

Member of UUCC and a member of the Committee on Ministry

I am relatively new to taking part in social action events such as rallies and protests. Only four years ago, my kids and I walked with “Generations for Peace” in the Homewood, 4th of July parade for the first time. This fall, I joined the Occupy Chicago movement to let Wall Street and the government know that there needs to be major changes in regulating businesses, creating jobs and being responsible players in our country. On November 6, Dave Matteson and I participated in a rally in Washington D.C. to protest the Keystone XL Tar Sands pipeline. This was by far the largest rally I ever attended. I appreciate all the hard work of Bill McKibben and others for organizing the event.

We learned quite a bit about the proposed tar sands pipeline while in D.C. There is no question that the pipeline, crossing USA’s largest aquifer, will leak. The previous pipeline built by this company had over 13 spills in the first 12 months of existence. Cleaning oil spills that find their way into underground aquifers would be an incredibly difficult task. An even bigger issue is that when the dirty oil from tar sands is burned, it will put huge quantities of carbon into the atmosphere. The processing and use of a barrel of tar sands oil creates three times more carbon than the average barrel of oil used in the U.S. now. Instead of using oil that is increasingly more difficult and environmentally costly to obtain, we need to focus on developing other sources of energy such as solar and wind. Stopping the tar sands pipeline is essential to keeping America’s drinking water clean, stopping the trend towards global warming, and redirecting our addiction to oil. Buying into the tar sands pipeline is a distraction from renewable energy development.

On the morning of the rally, Dave and I travelled to main mall in D.C. and walked to the White House while seeing other national beauties such as the Capital building and the Washington monument. We saw the elaborate gardens in the back of the White House along with numerous security outposts around the perimeter. As we neared Pennsylvania Avenue, a group of at least a thousand people gathered together around a stage. The organizers were firing up the crowd and giving some instruction. This was to be a peaceful rally. We were here to make a point to Obama to oppose the Keystone XL Pipeline. We were told that this was the largest environmental rally to have taken place in DC in over 20 years.

At 3 P.M. we were instructed to begin our walk to surround the White House. This was our way of letting Obama know how important this cause was to us. What seemed to be like a thousand people in the beginning swelled to ten thousand. Dave and I walked with the first group to form a line on the backside of the White House. We talked with others and held up the 50 foot-long inflatable pipeline for a short while. We also chanted along with the other such things as: “Hey Obama, We don’t need no Pipeline drama.”

Once we arrived at our position near the back of the White House, we joined hands and formed five concentric circles around the building and continued chanting and singing. An hour later, we walked back to the stage near Pennsylvania Ave. to hear more speakers such as a former Nobel peace prizewinner who had signed a letter to Obama about opposing the pipeline. I was amazed by how many college students there were supporting a greener Earth. As it grew darker, we left the rally with our hopes high and feeling satisfied that we had participated in something that just might make a difference. I figured that even if the pipeline decision didn’t go our way, we had spoken our peace. If most of the people at the rally felt as invigorated about taking care of the Earth as I was that day then we had succeeded.

On November 10, four days after the rally, President Obama sent the pipeline issue back to State Department for a thorough review, which most analysts say will effectively kill the project. The president explicitly noted climate change, along with the pipeline route, as factors that a new review would need to assess. The review will take until, at least, the beginning of 2013 to complete. There is no way, with an honest review, that a pipeline that helps speed the tapping of the world’s second largest pool of carbon can pass environmental muster. The President made it clear that cronies of the pipeline company will not carry out the environmental assessment, as had been originally agreed.

Participating in the Tar Sands rally with people of all ages from around the country was an amazing and inspiring opportunity. There will be future opportunities for members of our UU community to speak up on behalf of caring for the environment. This may take the form of attending a rally, writing a letter to your congressman, writing an editorial for the local newspaper, or simply talking to people in your life about the importance of caring for our planet. Together, we can inspire others and make a difference.

Happenings

December 22
from 6-9 PM

Candlelight
Labyrinth



The Winter Solstice is the shortest day of the year. It is the border between the past and coming years; the past, present, and future. It represents new beginnings and great new possibilities... leaving behind what does not serve us, and embracing that which does.

Come celebrate the New Year at our Candle Labyrinth. Enjoy a calming, yet invigorating meditation. Peacefully walk the Labyrinth to consider the passing year, and the coming new year. Reconnect with your spiritual center. Sit and pray for peace, health, Mother Earth, freedom from, and freedom for; in the warmth and serenity of our Labyrinth.

A \$10 donation is requested from non-UUCC members.

Safety Note: Please do not wear long, loose, draping or dragging clothing. The Labyrinth is created using open topped glass candle holders.



*A Christmas candle is a lovely thing;
It makes no noise at all,
But softly gives itself away;
While quite unselfish, it grows small.*
- Eva K. Logue

Please Save the Date

South Suburban PADS is having its annual Gala Fundraiser in the form of a "N'awlins Nite"/Mardi Gras-theme party from 4PM to 8PM on Saturday, February 11, 2012 at 115 Bourbon Street (3359 W. 115th St. in Merionnet Park). South Suburban PADS is an emergency shelter program that has operated in the South and Southwest suburbs of Chicago since December 1990. It is an interfaith effort that provides food, shelter, and hospitality to men, women and children with now place to live.

Camelot Care Centers of Matteson, Illinois

Camelot Care Centers, Inc. is actively recruiting individuals and families to provide foster care in our Specialized Foster Care Program. Specialized foster kids have a history of many types of trauma in their backgrounds which can include physical, sexual and emotional abuse. Due to their histories of severe trauma, they exhibit more emotional/behavioral challenges. They have higher supervision needs as well as requiring structure, consistency, commitment, and nurturing in a home environment. Kids needing specialized foster care placement are usually between the ages of 5-18, with most being 12 or older. Once licensed, Camelot matches a child with your home. Camelot looks at the needs of each particular child referred and matches them with a home based on the strengths, experiences and preferences of the foster families. Information is shared with the foster parent(s) about the prospective referral and pre-placement visits are arranged for the family to meet the child. Part-time respite homes are also needed. Respite is a short-term placement (usually 2-7 days).

Maybe you can't change the whole world, but you can change the world of a child. To take that first step in becoming a foster parent, call **Camelot** at **(708)747-7250** or **stop by our office at 4747 Lincoln Mall Drive, Suite 600 Matteson, IL 60443.**

Church Information

70 Sycamore Drive
Park Forest, IL 60466
PHONE: 708-481-5339
E-Mail: diane@uuccpf.org
Web: www.uuccpf.org

Office Administrator

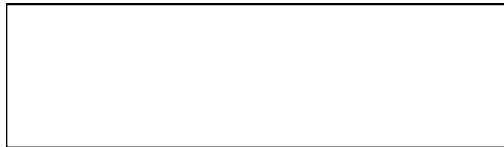
Diane O'Connor
Office Hours:
Monday – Friday
10am – 2pm

(Please note from time to time some office hours vary)

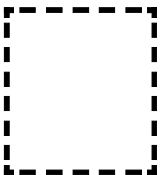
Newsletter deadline is always the 20th of every month

****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



Return Service Requested



*Unitarian Universalist
Community Church
70 East Sycamore Drive
Park Forest, IL 60466-260*

