



UUCCPF Community News

Unitarian Universalist Community Church

December, 2012

Park Forest, IL



The President's Column by Bruce Swiecicki

Sunday Worship Schedule 10:00 AM

December 2:
"The Season"
By Dennis Condon

December 9:
"The Importance of Little Things"
By Rev. Denise Tracy

December 16:
"To Be Thankful"
By Carl Wolf

December 23:
"Holiday RE Program"
By Dan Feldt

December 30:
"Isaiah's Call - Our Call"
By Rev. Sam Smith

"Whispering Words of Wisdom, Let It Be--The Beatles"

When I was a boy, I used to really enjoy watching biographical religious movies that portrayed people who experienced supernatural events or had extraordinarily strong faith. These people would be doubted and sometimes ridiculed by those around them, even family members who were closest to them. Ultimately, their strength of faith would carry them through and they would be vindicated; their detractors eventually realizing that these people were special and deserving of veneration, not derision. I would imagine myself taking on the role of the saintly people and being "persecuted" by, oh I don't know, a misunderstanding parent perhaps?

But to a young Catholic boy, movies like "Song of Bernadette" and "The Miracle of Our Lady of Fatima" provided motivation to hold strong to my faith and make myself into a better person. Perhaps those are the necessary paybacks for having invested oneself in any particular religion: becoming motivated to act in a manner that improves not only one's outlook on life, but also increases their willingness to do good works in the world. As Unitarian Universalists, I'd like to think that no matter what our religious backgrounds are and where our life experiences have led us to this point, we share a common motivation to make the world a better place for those that are here now and those that will come after us.

Recently, I read an interesting article about Charles and Andy Stanley, a father and son who are very well known and successful preachers from the South. The article portrays their relationship with each other and with their wife/mother from the time that Andy began preaching in his father's church and up to the present. Andy became very successful and eventually broke away from his father's church and formed his own competing church. Their relationship had been very tumultuous and probably not unlike many other relationships between parents and their children. After literally forcing themselves to spend time together, they did wind up resolving many of their differences and ultimately developed a healthy relationship.

What struck me, though, were the readers' comments that appeared beneath the Internet article. Rather than focus on the successful outcome of an oftentimes painful relationship between two people that could have been anybody we know, the commenters carried on a debate over the religious beliefs of the father and son and the churches they belonged to. Many of them simply overlooked the beauty contained in the article and used the opportunity to comment as a platform to extol their own beliefs and disparage those of others.

So as we enter the December holiday season, I would like to wish all of you reading this a healthy and happy time, spent in whatever manner you choose. As for me, I will keep in mind that there are many who celebrate different traditions and beliefs during this time of year; traditions which strengthen and motivate people to be forces for good in the world. As to passing judgment on the truths contained in those beliefs, I'll just let it be.

~Bruce

Bruce Swiecicki
President

Darlene Obejda
Vice-President

Richard Treptow
Treasurer

Diane O'Connor
Office Administrator

**December 21
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.



Christmas Eve Service 7 p.m.

A musical Christmas Eve service will be led by Bev Feldt and Chris Ussery. Punch and cookies will be coordinated by Pat Segner.

Volunteers are needed to bring cookies and to help with set up and clean up.

New Year's Eve Party 8 p.m.

Come join us to celebrate the new year. Volunteers are needed to bring snacks and help with set up and clean up. No alcohol will be served.



Soup Kitchen Fundraiser for PADS and Respond Now:

Sunday, January 6, 2012 11:30am

Volunteers are needed to bring soup and brunch foods. Helpers are needed for set-up and clean-up. Please sign up on the snack table. Checks are to be made out to UUCC.

The money collected for PADS (Public Action to Deliver Shelter) will be used by our church cook team to buy food when we cook and serve the homeless, approximately \$200 once or twice per month. Optional checks to UUCC marked Respond Now on the memo line will be sent to Respond Now, our local agency serving those in need.

Please be generous. Questions? See Darlene Obejda.



December Forum

Sundays @ 11:30am

December 2: No Forum, Community Sunday.

December 9: Top Box Foods: A representative from St. Iranaeus will present information about “Top Box” which is a program that offers groceries to families and individuals for half the cost of retail.

December 16: JoAnn Franczek, a member of UUCC, will be presenting work she supports in Uganda. “Bead for Life: Eradicating poverty one bead at a time.” Enjoy the beauty of these recycled paper beads, made by women in Uganda, and hear these women’s stories.

December 23: Christmas Weekend/ No Forum

December 30: Rev. Sam Smith - Presents a remembrance of Hiroshima together with talking about the History of Fellowship of Reconciliation as well as providing a description of the Fellowship of Reconciliation today. Rev Sam Smith is an ordained minister in the Church of the Brethren and has served for the past 16 years as a Youth Pastor in Mennonite, Brethren and United Methodist Congregations in the Western Suburbs of Chicago. He has a Diploma from Moody Bible Institute in Pastoral Studies, a B.A. from Wheaton College in Sociology and a Master of Divinity with an emphasis in Peace Studies from Bethany Theological Seminary. Currently Rev Smith has completed one year of work on his Doctor of Divinity at Fuller Seminary. Sam’s doctoral work centers on issues regarding Youth and Militarism. Rev Smith has been one of the primary promoters of the I Will Not Kill Campaign. Currently he is a Youth Speaker/Peace Activist with Heavy Light Ministries and the Pastor of the Upper Xtreme Fellowship.

Forum for the Beautification of the UUCC Building and Grounds December 2, 2012

Announcements have been made at church regarding the opportunity for interested persons or groups to present their ideas for improving the appearance and usefulness of the church and its surrounding grounds. The purpose of the December 2 forum is to allow these presentations to be made in front of members of the congregation so that questions could be asked of the presenters and feedback can be provided on the spot. After the conclusion of the session on December 2, the presenters may choose to revise their proposals based on the feedback they receive. All proposals in their final form should be submitted to the Board by December 16th.

The Board of Trustees will have appointed a small task force to review the proposals and make a recommendation to the Board for consideration and action. In order to establish a common basis for the review of the proposals, we ask that each proposal address the following criteria:

- The purpose for the project and an overall description of it (i.e., to beautify the grounds, to make the facility more attractive to renters or for special events, to make the grounds more “user friendly,” etc.)
- The impact of the project on the building and the environment
- The timeline for the completion of the project
- Resources needed to complete the project
- Whether ongoing maintenance will be needed and if so, what type
- Total cost to complete the project and cost of any ongoing maintenance



What's going on in RE? Dan Feldt, Director of RE



Congratulations to all the kids who took part in “Trick-or-Treat” for UNICEF this year. They collected \$109.06, thanks to the congregation’s generous contributions. Ben Ziegler’s portrayal of Mr. Flesheater, the head zombie, got the fundraiser off to a running/lurching start.

As part of our “Neighboring Faith” religious education program this year, we visited Temple Anshe Shalom. Those of us who attended were intrigued by the amount of singing and ritual. It took us a while to adapt to reading the service hymnal from back to front and from right to left. Rabbi Paul Caplan was very generous with his time after the service and answered all the children's questions about the Jewish faith. We followed up our visit to the Temple with Beverly Feldt and Valerie Birk leading a discussion on what it was like growing up in the Jewish culture. The kids had a lot of great questions. In January, we’ll be visiting our next religious community. We’re planning a visit to an Eastern Orthodox Church.

On November 25, the RE class talked about the groups that the “Guest at Your Table” program will help in 2013. They’ll be telling you more about it on December 2, but the following is a brief description of one of the groups:



“What do you get when you cross a civil-rights lawyer with a hip-hop artist and add community organizing? Shahid Buttar! As executive director of the Bill of Rights Defense Committee (BORDC), a UUSC partner, Shahid brings communities together to help them protect their rights.

He works with UUSC and others, including activists and community members who are treated unfairly by the police and government because of their skin color, religion, or beliefs. That kind of unfair treatment is called profiling, which Shahid is working to stop.

Shahid has a lot of experience in defending people's rights, including the rights to privacy and fair treatment by the police. He's helped lead several organizations — like the American Constitution Society for Law and Policy, and Muslim Advocates — that want all American people to have, in our everyday lives, the rights that our U.S. Constitution says we have.”

There will be “Guest at Your Table” boxes available in the gathering room starting on December 2. There are many worthy groups this year, some located in the United States and working on issues here. Please take a box home with you and return it within the first two weeks of January. Thank you for your support. Hope you had a very Happy Thanksgiving!

~Dan

Around UCCPF

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 3rd Saturday of the month from 6:30-10:30 pm.
More info: Dave Matteson
708-672-8837 or 708-408-1421.

This month Rainbow Café will meet on December 15th at 6:30pm

Choir Rehearsals



Please join us for choir practices on **Tuesdays at 7:30pm.**

For more info contact bevfeldt@gmail.com.

Silent Meditation



Silent Meditation is being held in the gathering room every **2nd and 4th Mondays of every month from 7:30 - 8:30p.m.**

For more information, contact Diane between 10am & 4pm at 708-481-5339 on Mon, Tues, Thurs or Friday.

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. 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. For more information email Andy at:

DrumUCC@yahoo.com

Note: In place of the December Drumming Circle we will have our annual Winter Solstice Candlelight Labyrinth Event from 6-9pm

UCCPF Social Issues Free Movie & Discussion

There will not be a movie night in December due to the holidays.

We need help getting posters for RAINBOW CAFÉ into coffee shops, bars, music spots, movie theaters, etc. in the surrounding suburbs.

Please pick up poster(s) in the Gathering Room, and list (on the clipboard page on the round table) the places where you will take a poster. Clarify that it should NOT be removed as we meet monthly. Please return extra posters to Gathering Room as they are costly.

Dave Matteson

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 1pm-3pm at UCC. Nancy Pfalscraft, a certified D.U.P. teacher, is our primary leader.

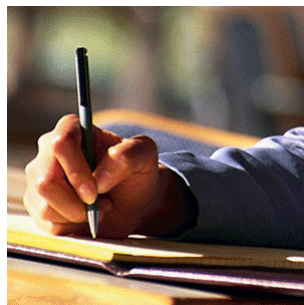
For more info call: Pat Segner 748-2217

Next Dances of UP: December 15 1-3pm

December



| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|--|--|-------------------|-------------------|---|---|
| | | | | | | 1 5:30pm Decade Birthday Party/Potluck/ |
| 2 10am Worship/RE 11:30am Community Sunday - No Forum | 3 9:30am Yoga 7pm Board Meeting | 4 7:30pm Choir | 5 7:30pm Yoga | 6 9:30am Yoga | 7 6:30pm Family First Friday | 8 9am-4pm "A Day of Zen" |
| 9 10am Worship/RE 11:30am Forum | 10 9:30am Yoga 7:30pm Meditation | 11 7:30pm Choir | 12 7:30pm Yoga | 13 9:30am Yoga | 14 | 15 1pm Dances of UP 6:30pm Rainbow Café |
| 16 10am Worship/RE 11:30am Forum | 17 9:30am Yoga | 18 7:30pm Choir | 19 7:30pm Yoga | 20 9:30am Yoga | 21 6-9pm Winter Solstice Candlelight Labyrinth | 22 |
| 23 10am Worship/RE 11:30am Forum | 24 7pm Christmas Eve Service | 25  Christmas Day | 26 7:30pm Yoga | 27 9:30am Yoga | 28 | 29 |
| 30 10am Worship/Re 11:30am Forum | 31 8pm New Year's Eve Party | | | | | |



"Member Musings"

(Share Your Thoughts!)

This is your opportunity to get on the soapbox and share your thoughts with UCC members and friends. We will run an article of 250-300 words every month written by a member or friend of our congregation. The article could be a personal statement and it should be in good taste and related to one of our seven principles. If you are interested, send your name to Bruce at swicengineer@sbcglobal.net. We will randomly pick a name at the beginning of each month. Articles should be received by the 15th of each



Green Sanctuary Committee - by Robin Barrett

Light and Dark, Again

"Within the circle of the year... we turn aside, alone. Out of the sunlight gone, into the darker circles of return."
~Wendell Berry

May the solstice and the New Year bring you peace, reflection and renewal. This month's full moon is The Cold Moon. Namaste

Report on November 13th Board of Trustees Meeting

The following are some of the highlights from the Board of Trustees meeting November 13th:

- In recognition that there is no longer a ministers discretionary fund to assist those in immediate need, the board passed a motion to allow the church to assist those in immediate financial need with the consent of a majority of the president, vice-president and treasurer.
- Barb Anderson Morris will be the primary contact person for information on the Top Box food distribution program. The church benefits from participating in this program by receiving 5% of the total paid by UUCC members and friends.
- The board declined an offer from the Hobart, IN, Unitarian Universalist church to combine resources with them and pay for a full time minister that would split his time between the Hobart church and UUCC. The board felt that the time is not right to enter into an agreement with a minister.



A Day of Zen Saturday, December 8, 2012

Steve McCabe from The Wetlands Zen Group presents a day of meditation that includes instruction in sitting meditation, walking meditation, and support through sharing of experiences.

Time: 9am to 4pm; lunch break -12 noon to 1pm
Please bring your own food and beverage or a dish to share.

Location: Unitarian Universalist Community Church, 70 Sycamore Dr, Park Forest IL

Cost: \$15 suggested donation. To register, please contact Diane O'Connor at (708) 481-5339 or diane@uuccpf.org (All proceeds go to UCCPF).

Wetlands Zen Group of South Suburban Cook County IL
(Affiliated with Prairie Zen Center, Champaign IL)

Church Information

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

Office Administrator

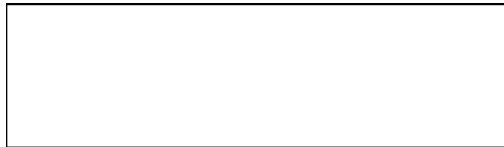
Diane O'Connor
Office Hours:
M, T, Th, F: 10am - 4pm
Wednesdays: Closed

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

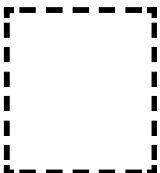
Newsletter deadline is always the 20th of every month

****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
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Park Forest, IL 60466-260*

