Welcome, Vernal Equinox!

Spring is on the calendar, but snow is on the ground! I suppose I should be happy because snow in March means that most likely, the propane industry is having a good year keeping peoples’ houses warm and since I work for the association that advocates on behalf of the propane folks, I might be able to keep my job for another year. But there’s always a flip side and in this case, it’s that my son Ryan hopes to play some tennis for his high school team this spring and that’s hard to do when there’s snow obscuring the lines on the court!

At UUCC, we’re hoping that springtime means rebirth. Your Board of Trustees is participating in a visioning session March 30 (thanks Ralph Mortensen!) so we can get ourselves oriented and see more clearly a path for our church to follow into the future. It was not too long ago that our church conducted a full scale visioning session under Reverend Yielbonzie. Here is an ordered list of what was agreed upon for the vision of the church at that time:

- A church with greater membership and increasingly diverse in all aspects
- Encouragement for members on their individual life’s journeys
- Strong programs for youth and adults in education and spiritual growth
- Focusing on the UU Principles as a means for fostering fellowship and developing strong bonds between members
- The application of the democratic process and the sharing of work between members
- Strong participation in our community and social action issues

We also agreed at that time that the mission of UUCC is to conduct religious services that support our vision and to effectively communicate UU values to the world at large by living our lives in a manner that exemplifies those values. Our session on March 30 will consider the continued relevancy of the vision shown above and perhaps establish clear goals to help us achieve our vision.

We will soon be celebrating the existence of UUCC at the annual Fellowship Dinner, which takes place on April 6. Of course, the dinner is tied very closely to the Pledge Drive for our church. We continue to need your financial support to provide the tools we need to help make our shared vision a reality. Best wishes and peace to all!

~Bruce
During the Community Sunday lunch following the church service you will have an opportunity to meet with a member of the Pledge Drive Team to discuss the role of our community of faith in your life and the need for a sustainable budget for promoting our many programs. If you are comfortable signing a pledge card at that time you will have an invitation to do so. Many thanks.

We invite you to join us on Pledge Sunday - April 7th, 2013 to make a pledge of your financial support for the 2013-2014 fiscal year.

Many thanks to all of you who continue to bring nonperishable items and personal items to church for Respond Now. These are greatly appreciated, especially since Respond Now continues to have a hundred or more clients each day it is open — Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Bar soap, deodorant, and toilet paper are needed, as well as toothbrushes and toothpaste. A reminder not to tie plastic bags in knots because it makes them hard to open and sometimes prevents the bags from being reused.

Thanks again, Suzie Brown

How Big is Four Hours of Your Time? To PADS and its Guests, Four Hours is Huge!

South Suburban PADS is gearing up for its Summer Interim Housing (IHP) Shelter Season for individuals experiencing homelessness. This shelter operates from May 1st through Sept 30th each year. The Summer IHP program is an exciting way for new volunteers to become acquainted with the PADS program. We need volunteers to supervise the site and the guests and to complete paperwork. We also need cook teams to provide meals. It’s wonderful way to get to know the guests because it’s the same guests at the same shelter night-after-night. If you are looking to volunteer and to find a way to connect with those you serve, this is the ticket. It could be the best four hours you spend each month! Training sessions are scheduled for Saturday, April 13th at 10:00am and Thursday, April 25th at 7:00pm. Volunteers only need to attend one session. Both will be held at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, 667 W. 8th Street, Chicago Heights, IL. Sessions run approximately 1.5-2.0 hours. Contact Dawn Thrasher, Community Resource Coordinator for PADS, 708-754-4357, dawn@sspads.org to register for volunteer opportunities and to learn about the many opportunities available to support the PADS mission.
April 7: No Forum, Community Sunday.

April 14: “Care of the Earth” - Andy Stevens will present. More information coming soon.

April 21: Jill Krysinski, science teacher at Bloom High School, will be speaking about local Brownfields. Brownfields are parcels of property that have been chemically contaminated. Often, properties in old industrial towns, that appear abandoned, are really Brownfields. If they remain unremediated, they contribute to urban blight and loss of tax revenue for business that could potentially be built on that abandoned property.

April 28: “Forgiveness” is a remarkable PBS documentary by Helen Whitney (who presented it at GSU 3/13). It is noteworthy as she interviews people in situations which would be terribly hard to forgive - and clarifies when forgiveness may be destructive. Dave will lead discussion.

Spring Clean-up Work Day!
Saturday April 13th, 9am – 2pm

Join us for sorting, organizing, cleaning, repairs and more! Come for an hour or whatever fits your schedule. A selection of tasks and supplies will be available. Refreshments will be provided. Donation requested for pizza. We would love to see you there!

If you can’t join us on that date, sign up for a task to finish on your own, or make a contribution towards supplies. We will also be working on Sunday, April 14 after the service until 2pm. Hope to see you there! For more information, call Nancy Irons 708-712-3228.

MEZZOS IN THE AFTERNOON
April 14th, 2013
First Unitarian Church of Chicago

5650 S. Woodlawn Ave  Chgo, IL
Join mezzo-sopranos Amanda Thomas, acting Music Director of First Unitarian church, and Chgo-area performer Andrea Caruso, for an afternoon of music featuring Brahms, Copland, Rossini and more. Free will offering. Call 773-324-4100, Extension 14 more information.

Report on March 19th Board of Trustees Meeting
The following are some of the highlights from the Board of Trustees meeting March 19th:

- The Board approved a request to grant space for a talk by Antonio Carrico, a practitioner of Naturopath techniques.

- The Board will be studying the current governing structure in an effort to streamline the process while utilizing our volunteers more efficiently.

- The Board passed a motion to accept a proposal from the Miracle Center Church that would allow the church continued occupancy while it pays off its accumulated late rental charges over the course of 2013.

- The fund for building and grounds activities has grown to over $6,000, thanks to a large donation from the late Fen Taylor and contributions from family and friends to the fund in Fen’s name.
On Sunday, March 24, the religious education classes had our Seder brunch. We had some very interesting discussions during our Passover meal. The 10 plagues drew particular interest. A lively discussion centered around who in the family was the firstborn, and therefore would've died on Passover night. When the blended families were considered, the whole topic became a bit complicated and somewhat grisly. We talked about the joys that freedom brings us. They included freedom of speech, freedom to sing what we want, play sports and get a hug from our moms. If anyone is not free to do these things, none of us is totally free.

I'm excited to report that the board has okayed a new religious education project. It's a preschool sing-a-long on Saturday mornings. We'll be singing fan favorites such as “The Wheels on the Bus” and “Itsy-Bitsy Spider.” This program will promote one or both of the parents spending quality time with their preschooler and some basic communication and sharing skills. My hope is that young families will discover the joys of this loving community and wish to become part of it. So if you have any friends or family who might be interested, we'll have the details up on the website soon. I'll also make up a flyer. I believe this will be of great service for the church to provide and lots of fun.

We had a good-bye cake during the Seder for Valerie and Ben Zeigler because they are moving with their mom Amy to Oak Park. We wish them all the best!

Namaste,
Dan

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BRINGING THE BIBLE(S) BACK DOWN TO EARTH: Experiments in Freedom
Five Talks by Bruce Woll PhD from University of Chgo in History of Religions
Sundays: April 7, 14, 21, 28 and May 5 12:15 - 1:30pm
Unitarian Church of Hinsdale 17 W. Maple, Hinsdale

Bruce Woll grew up in a Christian missionary family in Africa. He has spent a lifetime studying the Jewish and Christian Bibles and religions, based on the scholarship of the last 200 years, recent archaeological finds and modern multicultural critiques. These talks sketch the thousands-year history of the Bible, with emphasis on early Israel, early Judaism and early Christianity. The linchpin of this human story is the period of Second Temple Judaism. The stand point of the lectures is freedom: our continuing experiment with and hope for a public, shared freedom.
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 April 20th at 6:30pm

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. A $10 love offering is requested.

Social Movie Night

 Helpers are needed to select movies, set up, clean up, open up and be in charge when needed. For more info and to possibly volunteer, speak with Darlene Obejda.

UUCCPF Social Issues

Free Movie & Discussion Night - Saturday, April 27th
6:00pm Vegan Pot Luck
7:00pm Cooking Films:
Dr. Joel Fuhrman’s "Cook to Live!"

Join us for an optional vegan pot luck at 6pm. At 7pm learn how to prepare delicious, nutritious dishes to improve overall health, increase immunity, and reduce cancer risk and growth. (two 40 minute cooking DVDs).

Free coffee and tea, Optional: Bring a healthy pot luck vegan dish, optional donations welcome, bring a friend!

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 UUCC. Nancy Pfalscraft, a certified D.U.P. teacher, is our primary leader.

For more info call: Pat Segner 748-2217

Next Dances of UP: April 20th 1-3pm

Currently there are NO Tuesday choir rehearsals

BUT if you are interested in joining us for choir practice on Sunday mornings, please contact Bev Feldt.

bevfeldt@gmail.com.

Silent Meditation

Silent Meditation is held every 2nd and 4th Mondays of every month 7:30 - 8:30pm.

Philosophy Circle

will continue on the 1st and 3rd Monday in April.
"Member Musings"  (Share Your Thoughts!)

This is your opportunity to get on the soapbox and share your thoughts with UUCC members and friends. We will run an article 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 month and will be reviewed for appropriateness of content and edited where necessary.
If it weren't safe, it would not be on the shelves. I have heard this as a response to labeling, health, etc. more than once. This belief does not seem to be exclusive to uneducated populations. I wonder how much hope and fear are part of our psyches in this area? Hope that we are being watched out for and a fear of looking at science in reference to the chemicals that touch our daily lives.

Over the last several days I have received three action alerts from respected environmental groups that point out the inferior consumer legislation in our nation as compared to other industrialized democracies.

The Center For Science in The Public Interest points out two boxed macaroni and cheese products. One sold here, the other sold in the UK. They are virtually identical except for one thing. Our children in the US can enjoy food dye numbers 5 and 6 in theirs, while these additives are left out of the UK version. Both of these are discredited petroleum derived chemicals, "give me another serving of that, please", chemicals found to adversely affect children's behavior. In addition, the FDA has found high levels of the carcinogen, benzidine, in both these yellow dyes.

Women's Voices For The Earth is leading a campaign to encourage legislation that would require full disclosure of fragrance chemicals in products. Again, our neighbors across the Atlantic are ahead of us here. The EU already has these requirements in place. Representative Stephen Israel (NY) has introduced The Cleaning Product Right to Know Act, which will require full disclosure of ingredients. The Safe Cosmetics Act would phase out chemical ingredients linked to cancer, birth defects and developmental harm in addition to requiring that all fragrance ingredients be listed. Allergic reactions to fragrances are on the rise. This "phasing out" period is a bit of a challenge to my expectations of justice, but, at least, people may have access to the information in the meantime.

This is not the first time that national differences in consumer protection has come to my attention. There are numerous other examples. I wonder what factors encourage and support this in our society as opposed to others? Why can't we be number one in this area?

The Cherokee call this month's full moon, "The Flower Moon". It is also known as The Pink Moon. Pink phlox are one of the first wild flowers to appear.

For all of life, may every day be "Earth Day". Go out and celebrate!

Robin Barrett

TODAY WE MARCH - TOMORROW WE VOTE!
RALLY AND MARCH WITH CONGRESSMAN GUTIERREZ

✔ AGAINST CCA
& THE FOR-PROFIT IMMIGRANT PRISON

WHEN: SATURDAY, APRIL 6TH   RALLY AT 1PM
WHERE: AZTECA DE ORO, 1013 COLLINS ST, JOLIET, IL 60432
JOIN US FOR A MARCH TO THE WILL COUNTRY CLERKS OFFICE
@302 N CHICAGO ST. JOLIET, IL 60432
Church Camp Out

Saturday, June 1st -
Monday, June 3rd (Noon)
Indiana Dunes State Park
Chesterton, IN

- Nissaki Group Camp #1 (across from the regular campgrounds)
- Entrance Fee: $15 per car
- Camping paid by the church
- Bring your own food and equipment
- There are hotels in Chesterton
- Shared campfire cook-out Saturday Night / Nature center on Sunday

Camping will be free at Nissaki Group Camp 1. The site is only for tents but there are washrooms and shelter with electric. If you do not want to camp, you can set up rooms at the Spring House Inn.

www.springhouseinn.com   219-926-8258

Directions: Take 94 East to 49.
Follow the signs to the State Park.
(Sign up sheet on bulletin board)
Edgar’s Place Coffee House

Proudly presents

Innisfree Classical Folk Ensemble

Saturday, April 13th at 8:00 pm
Adults: $15.00
Kids: $10.00

Innisfree

Innisfree is a Chicago based group who have enjoyed exploring and playing Celtic and Appalachian folk music for over 20 years. Second place winners in “Ensemble Arrangements” at the Chicago all-city Irish competition (“Fleadh Cheoil”), their music has been enjoyed from coffeehouses to cathedrals, and from historical re-enactments to folk festivals.

Their unique, layered arrangements blend Celtic, country and classical elements of traditional tunes into a seamless whole.

The group includes Kathy Folkerts on flute, tin whistles, guitar and vocals; Tony Janacek on guitar, mandolin, and vocals; Angie Kieltyka on hammered dulcimer and bodhran; Ken Kieltyka on lap dulcimer and percussion; and Lynn Malneckoff on violin and viola.

Edgar’s Place Coffee House is located in the Unitarian Universalist Community Church at 70 Sycamore Drive in Park Forest, IL.

Edgars Place is a fundraiser for the Unitarian Universalist Community Church.
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.