Autumnal Musings

Chilly fall weather is upon us and it’s just a matter of time before we find ourselves in the middle of winter once again. I’ve enjoyed living in the Midwest my entire life, with the opportunity to experience the four seasons, but I can’t deny there are times when the thought of waking up year ’round to warmer temperatures begins to appeal to me.

Then again, where else could I experience this on a Sunday morning: the fun of learning a new song with the wacky (and talented) people in the UUCC choir; be carried away by a Chopin prelude played by Chris; laugh at a creative and inspiring skit put on by UUCC children that emphasizes the worthy UNICEF organization; listen to an insightful review of the life of Charles Darwin; and participate in the post service fellowship that is available to all of us at UUCC? Top it off with a walk through Pilcher Park in Joliet on a sunny autumn afternoon with my wife, Karen, and it feels like a day well spent.

Robin Eggert Barrett was a woman of conviction who was not afraid to stand up for what she felt was in the best interest of us all. She was a contributor to UUCC in many areas, but I think caring for the environment was closest to her heart. Her efforts to educate and guide us in making the right choices did not go unappreciated by the many people she touched at UUCC. Our community will miss Robin but I know her legacy will continue to inspire us.

When I think about my own life, I know there is much room for improvement. Yet, I can’t help but reflect on the many blessings I have received, not the least of which is the opportunity to participate freely in a church community that encourages the sharing of ideas based on our own experiences. Our Fourth Principle, “A free and responsible search for truth and meaning,” has unshackled us all from the yoke of constrictive dogma, a blessing for which I will be forever grateful.

May peace surround you,

~Bruce
What if... life is not a maze but a labyrinth, a path that meanders to give us different views, doubles back on itself to give us multiple chances to see clearly, lets us revisit our joys & sorrows but in the end always takes us to the sacred centre - to Life, to Love, to the Wholeness of which we are made & by which we are held? How would imagining life this way affect the quality of your day? The thing about the labyrinth is that you don’t have to worry about the destination - that’s assured. We can relax & play with different ways to travel - fast, slow, stretching upward, turning inward, low to the ground, dancing, paying attention to what is around us. . . the possibilities & opportunities to contribute are endless. It’s not a problem to be solved, not a test to be passed, but a journey to savour & drop into with each step. ~Oriah Mountain
Grounds & Building Beautification Task Force Report on the Labyrinth Presentation

By Laurene Lambertino-Urquizo

After our church service on Sunday, October 21st, we held a forum presentation on the topic of labyrinths in our church sanctuary. As phase 2 of our long range plans, the Grounds & Building Beautification Task Force has come up with a way for us to build another addition onto the end of the new paver patio that would serve as additional space for holding weddings and other ceremonies, and could also contain a labyrinth that could be used by our congregation and the community at large as a meditative and spiritual aid. Our presenters last Sunday, Marty and Debra Kermeen, are well-known and very successful builders of labyrinths who shared with us their stories and slides of many of the labyrinths that they have built around the country and outside of the U.S. They also told us about the history and meaning of the labyrinth, which has its origins some 5,000-10,000 years ago.

In addition to the hour long lecture, a question and answer period following that brought up many of the concerns that members of the congregation hold about the impact of building a labyrinth might have to our forest and natural surroundings. We were fortunate to have in our audience David Zaber, Ph.D., who holds a degree in Natural Resources and Environment, Resource Ecology and Management. David had the opportunity to walk our grounds on Saturday to measure and assess our trees and the impact that any building done within the circle of trees at the end of the paver patio would have on them. What he found has broader implications to our church than our plans to build a labyrinth. He found that many of our ash trees are already dead from the Emerald Ash Borer and a few of them need to be removed because of the danger of them falling and injuring someone, or onto our church building itself. Also, he found that runoff from the apartments on the hill to the east of our driveway was coming down onto our property and causing an ever-widening gully to form that could be dangerous if someone fell into it. Our Board will need to look into these findings and find solutions to deal with them.

As for the fear that building another structure onto our land might cause stress to our trees by its weight or impermeability by water, David was able to assure us that as long as no more than 25% of a tree’s roots would be affected, the tree’s safety would not be jeopardized. David estimated that of the viable trees in the circle, no more than 8% of any given tree’s roots would be affected, well under the 25% limit. For those who do not know David (he has visited us several times before), he is the son of our member Emily Zaber, and this writer’s cousin. He resides in Monona, WS.

The construction of the proposed labyrinth project is reliant on the possibility of receiving a grant through the Chalice Lighters Program of the UUA and additional fundraising, therefore it is probably several years in the future to be completed. However, there is definitely a positive response from our congregation to this idea. I recall some time ago when many members were apprehensive of our building a paver patio outside our deck, but since then many have remarked that now that they can see it, they love it, and that it has taken us outside of our building and made it possible for us to enjoy our beautiful forest.

To help improve our chances to receive a Chalice Lighters Grant, we need 20% of our UUCC congregation to join the Chalice Lighters Program of the UUA. What this would involve is making about 3 yearly donations of $20 in the Fall, Spring, and Summer to this program. If you are interested in helping us, you can sign up online and make your donation at this website: http://www.midamericauua.org/programs/chalice-lighters. If you don’t have access to a computer, or if you would prefer, you could also contact Carol Hechenberger, our new Chalice Lighters Ambassador for more information or help in signing up.

Thanks for all your support! Little by little, we are building financial sustainability and a bright future for our church.
Edgar Peara awarded France's highest honor

More than 65 years ago, Edgar Peara served as an officer and helped lead the way for invasions of North Africa, Italy, France and Japan. "When the people at for example the VA hear about what I've done, they say they've never heard of anybody who approached that many locations and many campaigns," he said.

He was awarded the French Legion of Honor for his involvement in the liberation of France. "I feel happy about it," he said. "Not that it's really any significance to me, but because the community values it highly."

The Legion of Honor was first established by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1802. Watch an extended interview with Edgar Peara.

The following are some of the highlights from the Board of Trustees meeting October 15th:

- The Board approved a modification to our rental agreement with Miracle Center Church. The MCC would like to continue having access to the church on Thursdays, although they did agree to relinquish possession to UUCC for a special presentation on the Affordable Care Act, scheduled for October 24.
- Bev Feldt assumed the position of assistant office administrator and will be assisting Diane up to five hours each week.
- The rental rate schedule is being revised to emphasize UUCC’s attractiveness while receiving fair compensation for the use of our facilities. Dorea LaPorte and Marilyn Ragland have put much effort into this project.
- UUCC has purchased a plaque to honor those who have bequeathed to UUCC a sum of $1,000 or more upon their passing. The plaque will be on display later this year.
- The Board discussed the need to have people present during the time the building is being rented who are familiar with the church building and able to assist renters during events. This topic will need to be addressed in more detail at a later time.

PADS: I'm looking for someone to make meatloaf for Pads beginning in January. It would be 5 times. I have the recipe they have used for years.

Pads stands for Public Action to Deliver Shelter to the homeless population. We have about 65 men who come to our shelter at First Christian Church on Dixie Hwy. It's the second and fifth Monday of January, February, March and April.

If you are interested please give me a call, 708-365-6136. Thank you, Carol Mortensen

RESPOND NOW: We are gearing up for our annual Christmas Store. Up to 1,000 children will receive toys, winter outerwear, and clothing and food over a 2 day period. Please bring a new toy for a girl or boy on November 17th to church. I will take them to Respond Now. They really need sports equipment for boys, like baseballs, etc.
What's going on in RE?
Dan Feldt, Director of RE

Another round of applause for our stars -- Sam and Quinn Kirchner, Becca, Gwen and John-David May, and Madeline Schwartz. Also appearing were Melissa Schwartz, Joy Grainge, Colin Kirchner and Dan Feldt. They all do a wonderful job in our presentation of Sleepy Hollow for UNICEF. A big thank you goes out to the congregation on Sunday for their contributions to the UNICEF trick-or-treat boxes. I'm sure it was your open hearts, not the threat of missing body parts, that sparked your generosity.

$137.52 was collected. Using their math skills, the children figured out that this money could buy 4,057 vitamin-packed micronutrient powder packets or 306 packages of ready-to-use therapeutic food. Both are critically important for the nutrition of children during the first three years of life. They also reported on the many countries helped by UNICEF and the importance of the mother’s health. Thanks again for your generous giving. If you missed your chance to contribute this Sunday, there are a number of trick-or-treat boxes in the Gathering Room. Please feel free to fill them up!

Another couple of numbers that are important are 16 and November 5. Sixteen is the number of people signed up for “The World's Religions” sessions, so there are still a few spaces available. Please see me if you'd like to be added to the class roster. November 5 is the date for the first meeting from 7 to 9 o'clock. The book we’re using for source material, Huston Smith's The World Religions, is rich and textured reading. I'm sure we're all looking forward to sharing this experience.

That's all for now, the RE kids will be sharing their many talents with the congregation a few more times this year. ~Dan

Unfortunately, something has recently been stolen from the coat room. Please be aware that if you are the last person to leave the church you must be sure that all windows are closed and doors are locked. Thank you.
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.

RAINBOW CAFÉ will meet on November 16th 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.

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

For more info: Pat Segner 748-2217
Next Dances of UP: Nov 16, 2-4PM

There will NOT be a Movie Night for November and December due to the holidays.

The World’s Religions
A series of classes on world religions will be held here at UUCC.

1st and 3rd Tuesdays
Starting
November 5th
@7PM

The program is organized around a study guide developed by the UUA that uses the writings of Huston Smith as source material. The religions considered are Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Islam, Judaism, Christianity, and the Primal Religions.

For fifteen years Huston Smith was Professor of Philosophy at M.I.T. and for a decade before that he taught at Washington University in St. Louis. Holder of twelve honorary degrees, Smith’s fourteen books include The World’s Religions which has sold over 2-1/2 million copies, and Why Religion Matters which won the Wilbur Award for the best book on religion published in 2001. In 1996 Bill Moyers devoted a 5-part PBS special, The Wisdom of Faith with Huston Smith to his life and work.

For further info and to sign up, email Dan Feldt at ddfeldt@gmail.com.
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A COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING SERVICE FOR PARK FOREST will be held at Holy Family Church (Orchard and Sauk Trail) at 3pm on Sunday, Nov. 24, 2013. Pat Segner has volunteered to do a reading to represent UUCC. Social Service organizations, such as PADS, Respond Now etc. will be invited to have a table with information about their work and to ask for volunteers.

Please Note: Monday night silent meditation will begin again on November 4th at 7pm. Everyone is welcome. This is a free weekly event. For more information, call the church office at 708-481-5339.
Would we like to have a fossil free divestment church?

It’s easy, it’s cheap, it sends a signal that we are serious about moving towards being a fossil free church, a green faith community and working towards our green sanctuary standing.

http://cleantechnica.com/2013/10/10/fossil-fuel-divestment-spreading-faster-previous-campaign-even-apartheid/

This is the same technique that was applied to Apartheid in South Africa. It’s surprising how little money it really moves away from the coal and oil companies and yet how seriously the companies take it. If you read the article, it shows that divestment from coal and oil companies is happening faster than Apartheid. Below is an example of how seriously the coal companies are about this not happening.

http://bit.do/dgLQ-

Coal Companies Thrilled University Finally Acknowledges Their Voices

By The Editors
Published Sunday, October 27th, 2013

Leaders in the coal industry expressed gratitude this afternoon that President Christina Paxson and University administrators have respected their opinions in deciding not to divest from companies that mine and use coal.

We can make an impact with our money simply by shifting it into other good accounts. Let’s talk about it. Yours in love,
Jeff Green

29th Annual Do-It-Yourself Messiah

You, your family and friends are invited to participate in the 29th Annual “Do-it-Yourself Messiah”. You may sing, listen and/or participate as a financial supporter. Either way, it is an inspiring and most enjoyable afternoon.

Saturday, December 7th, 2013 at 3pm
Faith United Protestant Church
10 Hemlock Street, Park Forest

Winter WomanSpirit 2014 - Wisdom for the journey: A weekend with Sue Monk Kidd

Come spend a weekend laughing, learning, and growing at Winter Woman Spirit 2014, with Sue Monk Kidd and the women of the Central Midwest District. Explore your inner goddess!

Early registration begins Sept 1st at $160 per person and ends November 1st. After November 1st registration will become $175. (Hotel is separate) When: Feb. 7th through Feb 9th. Where: DuPage UU Congregation, 1828 Old Naperville Road, Naperville.

Call 800-552-2599 or go to www.hilton lislenaperville.com
Edgar’s Place Coffee House
Proudly presents
The Schticklers

Saturday, November 9th at 8:00 pm
Adults: $15.00
Kids: $10.00

Iconic veterans of all-star Jug, Swing, and Jewish bands, The Schticklers burst on the scene with rare vigor, virtuoso musicianship and timely schtick to win the 2010 Championship Battle of the Jug Bands, as well as the main stage opening slot of the 2011 Chicago Folk and Roots Festival.

The accomplished musicians that make up The Schticklers are Barb Silverman, lively vocalist of the Teflons and the legendary Laketown Buskers, Jon Spiegel, slide guitar player extraordinaire, Stuart Rosenberg, former host of Radio Gumbo, Joel Frankel, award winning children’s artist, and washtub bass guru Bob Stelnicki.

They combine their talents on dynamic fiddle and dobro, swing and sock guitar, washtub and washboard, five-part harmony, clogging, and the playful warmth of Jewish humor. Let the Schticklers warm your ears and your heart too and make you feel a little more Jewish.

To learn more about The Schticklers
www.silverbeammusic.com

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, W, F 10:30am - 3:30pm

(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