**The President’s Column** by Bruce Swiecicki

It’s 15 degrees outside and as we get ready to turn the page on another year, it seems like a good time to take stock of what we’ve accomplished as a church community over the last year or so and perhaps chance a gaze into the misty future.

First and foremost is the service we provide every Sunday to our members and visitors. I’m very happy and I hope you are too with the quality and variety of speakers our small group of recruiters has provided for us every Sunday in the pulpit. We’ve been able to deliver speakers with a wide spectrum of backgrounds ranging from conservative Christian to Earth-based Spirituality, with a healthy sprinkling of Buddhism, New Age and others as well. Our UUCC music offerings continue to be top-notch. Chris Ussery exhilarates us with his weekly selections and also provides playful accompaniment to the children’s stories and productions. Bev Feldt inspires our choir to sing as a unit, not only with her enthusiasm and musical capability, but also with her knowledgeable insight into how the music we sing should be interpreted.

UUCC has taken huge steps through our Beautification Project as we prepare our building to serve the community as the most desirable rental facility in our area. The effort of many people has contributed to bring us to where we are today and each of you know that we are indebted to you for the hours you spent discussing, planning, and in many cases performing the work that was needed to reach our milestones and goals throughout the year. We thank you for your dedication.

As we look to 2014, there have been two laws enacted in Illinois that will result in visible changes around UUCC. One is new “right to carry” gun law, which was approved in 2013 but will take effect in 2014. The UUCC Board of Trustees voted to make the church a “no guns allowed” facility and as a result, there will be a small sign posted at the entrance that depicts a gun with a red strikethrough. This sign will indicate that no guns are permitted in our building.

The other new law that we hope will have a significant effect on our building rentals is the “gay marriage” law. We are hopeful that our facility will be viewed as a desirable location to host weddings for people of any sexual orientation, and we are making plans to target advertising to the LGBT community.

Here’s to a happy, healthy and productive New Year in 2014 for UUCC and all its members! ~Bruce
**January Forum 11:30am**

**January 5th:** Community Sunday: NO FORUM

**January 12th:** Care of the Earth: The Eco-Friendliness of Hemp by Joy Grange and Richard Oram.

**January 19th:** Philosophical Considerations, coordinated by Leonard Kirchner

**January 26th:** Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs), with Mike Durschmid of the Organic Consumer Association

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**Growth Brainstorming Session**

The brainstorming session about attracting and keeping new members which was held during the December Community Sunday potluck was a big success! Seasoned members, congregational leaders, and new members met for over an hour gathering ideas. Several of those ideas will be able to be implemented quickly and with no cost. Those ideas include:

- Inviting visitors to partake of community Sunday first to ensure their inclusion in the activity and food.
- Ask newcomers to participate in something specific.
- Remind ourselves to greet anyone who is wearing a visitor’s nametag.
- Revise visitor registration to include permission to contact.
- Contact visitors by email within two weeks of their visit.

There are lots more exciting things planned! We will keep you posted! If you have ideas or questions, contact Darlene Obejda.

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The following are some of the highlights from the Board of Trustees meeting December 17th:

- The Board discussed the passed a motion to target the LGBT community with advertising the Woodland Chapel as a place to be married. The Board approved a $300 expenditure for that purpose.

- The Board approved a policy for addressing disruptive people in church-related meetings. It is sincerely hoped that the policy will not need to be used, but it does formalize a procedure considered to be respectful of all parties involved while still working towards the desired outcome of a peaceful and equitable resolution.

- The Board approved three rental fee schedules with different fees for UUCC members, non-members and not-for-profit organizations. This fee schedule is expected to be put in place beginning in 2014, but groups or organizations that are currently renting/using the facility will not be affected.

- The Board passed a motion that UUCC will be a “no guns permitted” building and a sign will be posted in accordance with the requirements of the new law. The board requested that before a sign is posted on the entrance door, that notification be made to the membership that the sign will be appearing. The sign will appear as follows:
Respond Now

Thanks to all of you who continue to contribute food and personal items to Respond Now. They are sorely needed. Many of you have also contributed toys for the Christmas Store and warm coats for this winter, as well as school supplies in August. Your generosity is really appreciated. Some information may give you some idea of the services they give to those in need:

During this past year they have distributed food to 31,005 individuals and 9,590 households, distributed $41,245 in prescription medication cards, and provided $124,659 in rent and mortgage assistance, as well as assisting with payment of utility bills where the need is very great. In addition, they assist clients in signing up for food stamp benefits, aid people in applying for the newly-revised Medicaid program, and assist clients in foreclosure prevention. Lest we feel too far removed from being in similar situations ourselves, statistics show that 51% of Americans will experience poverty at some point in their lifetime.

~Suzie Brown

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! Sue Monk Kidd is one of the foremost explorers of the feminine divine and spiritual creativity for women.

Fee: $175. (Hotel is separate)
When: Feb. 7th through Feb 9th.
Where: DuPage UU Congregation, 1828 Old Naperville Road, Naperville.

For more information: Call 800-552-2599 or go to www.hilton lislenaperville.com

WINTER MARKET OPENS
at St Irenaeus

Do you already miss shopping in the Farmers’ Market and the opportunity to buy locally grown and market fresh items for your family table? Good news, you don’t have to wait until summer to get fresh food for your family!

Each Sunday the Winter Market will be in the gym at St. Irenaeus. You can shop from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. every Sunday. S.A.F.E, (Sustainable Agriculture Food Exchange) the hydroponic greenhouse and farm in Wilton Center run by Gary Friedlund will be our first vendor. As many of you know, along with the community garden here at the parish, Gary and S.A.F.E. provided our pantry guests with fresh, healthy produce all summer. In addition, the greenhouse provided produce in early spring and is continuing through fall and winter to deliver food to our pantry guests. S.A.F.E.’s mission is to “provide healthy and earth friendly food, especially to those in the community who lack access due to social or economic conditions.”

Come be part of a new project that will benefit all who participate and taste the difference fresh food makes in your family’s kitchen. See you Sunday!

(See bulletin board for more information).
Applause all around for the talented cast of our radio play "The Quiltmaker's Gift." Elaine and John Pettit did a wonderful job of bringing the story’s main characters to life. Justin Libretti River was an excellent grumpy bear. Kate Pierce was a charming sparrow. Rebecca May led our ensemble while Jeremy Libretti River and Russell Oram portrayed the king's one thousand soldiers -- quite an amazing feat. Special kudos to the Chapel Singers Trio: Elaine Pettit, Kate Pierce and Gwen May; their rendition of "Woodland Chapel" was a real showstopper. For those who missed it, here are the words of the sponsor's jingle:

(sung to the tune of "Going to the Chapel of Love")

Rent the Woodland Chapel, it's the place to get married.
Rent the Woodland Chapel, it's the place to get married.
Gee, it's really pretty and you'll want to get married
Out here at the Chapel in the woods.

Spokewoman (Gwen May): Looking for a beautiful setting in which to tie the knot? We welcome all loving couples. Call 481-5339. Ask for Dorea. That’s 481-5339.

Rent the Woodland Chapel, it's the place to get married.
Rent the Woodland Chapel, it's the place to get married.
Gee, it's really pretty and you’ll want to get married
Out here at the Chapel in the woods.

Spokewoman: We’re UUCC and we approve this ad.

The radio play was adapted from a picture book written by Jeff Brumbeau and illustrated by Gail de Marcken.

During the next three Sundays, we'll be collecting "The Guest at Your Table" boxes. You can hand them to me or to Rich Treptow. Rich tells me that we've already collected over $100, so we're off to a terrific start. One of the people that "Guest at Your Table" helps is Malya Villard-Appolon, who works to end gender-based violence in Haiti and provides support to survivors. Malya is educating and empowering women to know their legal rights and to talk to one another to create safer communities.

Coming soon to the RE bulletin board in the hallway will be our “I Made a Difference” mural. The heading on the mural will be: “I made a difference: Please tell us how.” There’ll be plenty of space for people to write how they volunteer their time and energy to the church and the wider community. I'm sure this poster will be a revelation and inspiration to us all.

Happy and Joyous New Year 2014!
Free Movie & Discussion:
Genetic Roulette
Saturday, January 25, 7:00pm
6:00pm Optional Vegetarian Pot Luck Dinner

The documentary film, Genetic Roulette, shows us evidence pointing to GMO’s (genetically modified foods) being a major contributor to rising disease rates in the US, especially among children. This sometimes shocking film may change your diet and help you protect your family. *Watch the trailer on the internet. You won’t want to miss this film!* 85 minutes

Co-Sponsored with Illinois Right to Know


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Edgar’s Place Coffee House Proudly Presents

**Mark Dvorak & Eddie Holstein**

Saturday, January 11th at 8pm

Adults: $15  Kids: $10

**Mark Dvorak** is a modern day troubadour who has never stopped performing, writing and recording. He has been called "a folk singer's folk singer" with an "encyclopedic knowledge of traditional songs." His song writing has been called "wondrous" and "profound."

Since 1981, Mark has performed in nearly all the United States, and has visited several countries in Europe. Though he often appears on festival stages and in theaters, he is also at home in a more intimate setting.

His concerts are a mix of the familiar and the new, traditional folk and standards from the American songbook. He plays authentic country blues guitar and picks great old-time banjo. Mark enjoys involving his audiences in sing-along songs, just like The Weavers used to do, and he mixes in his own well-crafted and often poignant originals.

For more information: MarkDvorak.com.

**Eddie Holstein** has been a stalwart of the Chicago folk music scene for over 40 years. Eddie continues to perform today as well as teach at the Old Town School of Folk Music. He has written a number of songs, with Jazzman the best known, having been recorded or performed by Bette Midler, Bonnie Koloc, and others. His unique blend of folk songs, blues and humor always entertains.

In the early days of the folk boom, Eddie and his late brother Fred performed at legendary Chicago folk clubs like The Earl Of Old Town and Somebody Else’s Troubles where many performers like Steve Goodman, John Prine and others got their starts. Later, the Holstein brothers performed at their own club, Holsteins, on Lincoln Avenue, which drew national touring acts until closing in 1988. For more information: fred-holstein.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.
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 January 18th at 6:30pm

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

A Moment in Balance

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.

Zen Services

Learn and enjoy the simple, straightforward practice of Zen meditation. Please join us for sitting and walking meditation, followed by a brief Zen Service.

Time: 9am to 10:30am
Location: UUCC
Cost: Free Will offering, (proceeds go to UUCC)
Contact: For questions, contact Steve McCabe (708) 465-3116

Steve is a member of the Prairie Zen Center, Champaign, IL (www.prairiezen.org)

He is also a grateful student of Elihu Gemmy Smith. Steve leads the Wetlands Zen Group sitting group, which meets Sunday evenings at Insight Awareness in Homewood.

Choir Rehearsals

Join the UUCC choir! Practice is on Sunday mornings, Please email Beverly Feldt at bevfeldt@gmail.com.

Monday Night Silent Meditation

Monday evenings at 7:30pm. Bring a cushion if you’d like. This is a free weekly event. For more info call the church office at 708-481-5339.

Sacred Communication Workshops

January Dates to be Announced

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 more information, call Rev. Henrietta Byrd: 312-593-4732.

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: Jan 18th 2-4PM

The World’s Religions

1st and 3rd Tuesdays @7PM

This 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 further info email Dan Feldt at ddfeldt@gmail.com.
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"Winter is the time for comfort, for good food and warmth, for the touch of a friendly hand and for a talk beside the fire: it is the time for home."
- Edith Sitwell
Elleanor Halle got me started on the UUdivest movement. I have been getting emails from the uudivestment@yahoogroups.com. Sometimes there are statements from others that are too good not to share. When Julie Skye wrote this to the UUgroup, it set the tone for the higher purpose of being in this group.

http://divestfossilfuels.wordpress.com/instructions-for-petition-signature-gatherers/

On Thu, Dec 5, 2013 at 5:07 PM, Julie Skye <skye@pinnacleholdings.net> wrote:

Working together to end climate change involves teams employing different skill sets, actions, and focus. Each strategy has its own “spot” where we must maintain continuous pressure. Achieving success may look different, based on the strategy being used, and progress will always seem to be too slow. Success comes when we build the right teams, as we are doing. The organizing component of divestment is invaluable as it is a high profile activity: it alerts the public, and the fossil fuel industry, that business can’t, and won’t, go on as usual.

There are many strategies to end climate change: reducing demand through conservation and modifications to homes/buildings; subsidies / funding alternative energy sources; policy changes; carbon taxes; shareholder activism; divestment. Different strategies appeal to each of us, but if we divide up the work between different activist groups and stay focused on what each of us needs to be doing, success will come. Each strategy works together to exert continuous pressure on the fossil fuel industry. We simply can’t let the demoralizing worry that it is too little, too late, chew away at us.

As a member of the UUA Investment Committee and a past member of the Committee on Socially Responsible Investing, I am honored to be a Unitarian Universalist and to be a part of the global movement to end climate change. I am honored to be doing this work with all of you, our Committees, with the UUA staff, with other activists and with other faith traditions.

Kind regards,
Julie Skye, UUA IC

(This is also an invitation to everyone to possibly join the group to also get signatures from other churches to get petitions from other churches).

~Jeff

Look for products carrying the "Design for the Environment" label. This mark allows consumers to quickly identify and choose more products that are safer for their families and also help protect the environment. DfE uses scientific information to identify products designed to be safer for the environment and to help you choose products and services, such as electronics or automotive refinishing. In 2011, Americans using products with the DfE label cut the use of harmful chemicals by more than 756 million pounds. Look for the DfE label to find products with the safest possible ingredients and help protect the environment.
Begin the New Year by giving yourself a gift!

Meditation has been around for thousands of years, but only recently has it become recognized in the West as a powerful transformational tool. The benefits are wide spread, from improving your physical health, breaking habits, to self-discovery and creating a deeper spiritual connection.

The American Meditation Society has been helping people enhance their lives since 1976. Their unique program features several different techniques and their application for enhancing your life in the real world. No special diets, no difficult postures, and no change in your religious practices are required. We begin exactly where we are, with who we are, and learn ways to discover and uncover our own powerful true Self.

You are invited to join a Certified Meditation Instructor on an eight-week journey that will change your way of seeing and living in the world. At the end of the course, you will have the tools to begin living as you were meant to: joyfully engaged in every precious moment.

What You Will Learn: Level I

Class 1. Instruction in meditation.
Class 2. Layers of the Mind: Exploring the relationship between the mind and experience.
Class 3. Taking Charge of Our Lives: Growth and change; letting go of attachments and aligning ourselves with strength.
Class 4. The Art of Living: Maintaining balance - handling fear and anger.

What You Will Learn: Level II

Class 5. Improving the Power of Concentration - Instruction in Tratak.
Class 7. Chanting and developing a community.
Class 8. Tapping into Universal Energy - Living in grace – Introduction to Gurushakti

Costs: Level I and Level II are $80 per level ($160 total for the eight classes). At the conclusion of Level II, the student will be eligible to receive a personalized mantra in a special initiation ceremony. The cost of this mantra is $200. Your personal mantra is individually derived by one of two specially qualified people in the US through a process of deep meditation. Unlike other meditation training programs, the mantra received through AMS is unique – just as you are.

Meet your instructor: Buzz Hume from Glenwood, IL

“In the meditation practices I have been taught through AMS, I have found a comprehensive tool kit for life. I have seen the difference the practices make in my ability to deal with change and adversity. By quieting the chatter of the mind, different perspectives can be recognized, and solutions to problems spontaneously appear. I am grateful for learning these transformative methods, and am honored to now be able to teach them.”

Schedule of Classes for Level I: Saturdays -10:30am to 12:30
January 18, 25  February 1, 8
Level II will be offered in the summer.
Minimum Sign up Requirement: 3 students
Payment for Level 1 is due on January 18
Payment for Level 2 is due: (to be announced)

To Register for this workshop, contact Diane at 708-481-5339
The Unitarian Universalist Community Church
70 Sycamore Drive, Park Forest IL  www.uuccpf.org

The American Meditation Society is a non-sectarian, not-for-profit educational organization. For more information about AMS, please visit our website at www.AmericanMeditationSociety.org
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