The President’s Column by Bruce Swiecicki

To Each Our Own

To the extent that I consider myself a Universalist, my exercising of the Fourth Principle, the search for meaning in life, has led me to consider that not just one but many faiths provide a pathway to a fulfilling life here on earth. The responsibility, of course, rests with the practitioners to maximize their potential as human beings here on earth.

I am happy to see that mainline churches are more and more joining the effort to foster respect of the earth and assuming responsibility for its care so succeeding generations may not only exist, but thrive. The encyclical of Pope Francis, subtitled “On Care for Our Common Home,” is striking in that it counters a literal reading of the ancient scriptures known as the Bible. Specifically, Francis states that Christians “must forcefully reject the notion that our being created in God’s image and given dominion over the earth justifies absolute domination over other creatures.” This and several other “highlights” from the encyclical can be reviewed at key excerpts from Pope Francis’s encyclical on the environment

I bring up this point only because of the immense sway that Pope Francis has among the 1.2 billion Catholics in the world today. Shouldn’t we encourage such viewpoints among the predominantly Christian population in our little corner of the planet? They can represent a game-changing addition to our little UU army that for decades (at least) has tried to honor the Seventh Principle, “Respect for the Interdependent Web of All Existence of Which We Are a Part.”

Lest you think that I am converting back to Catholicism (I am not), the differences in religions (and in my estimation the likely cause of so much religious conflict throughout history) boil down to their eschatology, or “the part of theology concerned with death, judgment, and the final destiny of the soul and of humankind.” (Thanks, Google.) The Bible charges Christians to go out and gather more folks into the fold, and I don’t doubt that other religions do the same. When people adopt a faith, they might tend to close themselves off from other ideas because they feel a need to justify their beliefs and be “right.”

That’s the reason I became a UU. I don’t have all the answers but the fact that I’m free to search and learn from the sources that I choose to, including life’s experiences, is like being cut loose from my shackles to search for what is creating those images on the wall of Plato’s cave. Which is the reason I was disappointed a couple weeks ago when our guest speaker decided not to talk about the “soul.” I had the impression that because we’re UU’s, she thought there would be no interest in hearing about the soul. Are we too sophisticated to be open to thoughts on the soul? Not me.

I do hope you’re having an enjoyable summer.

~Bruce
CUUPs Field Trip to Hobart
UU Church for Lammas Celebration
Come celebrate the first harvest festival of the year. **Saturday August 1st - 7pm** at the Hobart Unitarian Church in Hobart, IN.

Ritual will be followed by potluck supper. Please bring a dish to share. Free will donation requested. To carpool, please contact Nancy (irons.nancy@gmail.com).

Under the coordination of Pat Segner, our church has developed a tutoring project in the Park Forest Elementary Schools at Blackhawk School and Mohawk School. We read with children in their classrooms or they read to us. We began the week of April 13th, after Spring Break. We plan to go every two weeks for about two hours. Approximately eight people are involved. We would like more volunteers, so if you are interested contact Pat Segner (708-748-2217).

The school principals and children were very appreciative of our efforts and pleased to connect with us. I am thankful that experienced congregants are willing to offer this community service. Hopefully we will be expanding our service in the future. In Fellowship, Pat Segner

PART-TIME CHURCH OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR POSITION

Applications are currently being accepted for a part-time position of Office Administrator at the Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Park Forest. The job would entail approximately 15 hours per week.

Strong computer skills, especially experience with Microsoft Office, are a definite plus. A demonstration of computer skills will be requested. Also, good communication and organization skills, the ability to manage several projects at once, and a willingness to be a team player are necessary for the person who fills this position, which will represent this church to our members and the public.

Applicants should submit their resume (with 2 references) and a cover letter addressed to the Board of Trustees, Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Park Forest, 70 Sycamore Dr., Park Forest, IL 60466.

The UUCC Healthy Living Group at UUCC on May 14th was attended by 27 participants. Adeline Anderson conducted an introduction to the Alexander Technique, which teaches postural habits to improve mobility, posture, and performance, with relief of pain, chronic stiffness, tension, and stress.

Adeline may come back in the Fall to coach us in practical applications of the Alexander Technique.
On September 11th, Suzie will be moving to Eugene, Oregon to be with her daughter. There will be a farewell party in her honor on August 2nd at UUCC at 11:30am in place of our usual Community Sunday. Please bring a dish. If you have any stories or memories of Suzie that you would like to have included in our celebration, please contact Barb Morris at 708-314-8856 or email bmmorris.anderson@gmail.com.

By Suzie Brown:

“I have been coming to UUCC since 1987. I came initially to this church to learn more about other religions besides Christianity. I had not gone to a church for several years, after leaving Good Shepherd United Protestant Church in Park Forest and participating in a house church called the Fellowship of Caring, which emphasized social action. Edgar Peara was the new minister here, and he encouraged me as a divorced woman. I lean more toward the Universalist part of our denomination, believing that God is everywhere and embraces everyone, in the lasting truth and mystery of all religions, and the importance of working in the community and on social issues.

Since becoming a member of UUCC, I have been chair of the New Member Integration Committee, have helped get Sunday speakers, have led a few forums, have donated groceries to Respond Now many times and participated on several committees and in classes for spiritual growth, such as “Mystics in our Midst,” “Was Jesus Legitimate,” the dream seminar, etc. I continue to work on my spiritual growth through reading and other classes.

Because of my belief that churches must be involved in their nearby and larger communities, I have been very active in Respond Now, the League of Women Voters, (where I chaired a study of Regional Cooperation in the Chicago Southland), the Park Forest Historical Society, (where I was a longtime board member and museum docent) interviewing 92 Park Forest WWII veterans and doing 57 interview transcripts, writing and teaching a Park Forest History curriculum to fourth graders, being the liaison between the Park Forest schools and the Park Forest 50th Anniversary celebration, etc., etc. I am a member of the Park Forest Hall of Fame.

I am moving to Eugene, Oregon on September 11. My daughter, Lynn, an anthropologist at the University of Oregon, has wanted me to come for a number of years. I am going now because I was diagnosed with early, mild Parkinson's disease last fall, and I need to have a plan in case I need help in the future. It will be wonderful to be near Lynn and her family, including two grandsons. I will be only a mile from their home. My one regret is that I will be so very far from my son, Bruce, who lives near Boston.

I have lived in my house since 1958, and it will be hard to leave it, Park Forest, and this church. I'm very grateful for all the good years I have had here. I hope to continue to receive the UUCC newsletter.

Come to Eugene for a visit. It's a stimulating town of about 150,000 with lots going on.”

Suzie Brown

Thank you for all you’ve done, Suzie! Best Wishes! We will remember you always!
Pastoral Care: Listening Hearts

Two Listening Hearts, or members of the Lay Pastoral Care team, are on hand each month to serve your needs. They are not acting as professional counselors, but rather a source for listening, support and resources. They have participated in training to become Listening Hearts.

Listening Hearts will soon have a ribbon on their name tags to identify them. If you do not spot one of them at church, or if you wish to talk to one of them in particular, please contact the office. The Listening Hearts for August: Darlene Obejda and Bev Feldt.

We are inviting women from the Bridgeview Mosque to partake in fellowship and create greater communication between our groups. Women are encouraged to bring homemade treats. Please contact Pat Segner for more information.

Any questions? Contact Laurene Lambertino-Urquizo.

Free Movie & Discussion
Friday, August 28, 7pm
“The House I Live in”

For over 40 years the War on Drugs has accounted for over 45 million arrests, cost over $1 Trillion, has made America the world's largest jailer and has damaged poor communities at home and abroad. *The House I Live In* goes inside America’s longest war to examine the effects of drug laws on everyone from the dealer and the grieving mother to the jailer and the federal judge. 108 minutes. 2013

Join in the lively discussion following the film!
Invite friends!
Free tea, coffee, and snacks.
Optional: bring a snack to share.
Optional donations appreciated.

Sacred Communication Workshops with Rev. Henrietta Byrd

These classes will be held online thru a virtual classroom. Please RSVP to register at Iforgiveforme@gmail.com. August dates will be determined from the group’s availability.

All are welcome; you need not have attended before. For more information, contact Rev. Henrietta Byrd: 312-593-4732.

 Helpers in the kitchen are needed on Sundays before the service and after coffee hour.

Annual Water Service
8/30/15
with Pat Segner
“WELL OF YOUR LIFE”

Please bring a sample of your own water, from this past year or any significant time in your life for our Communal Water Bowl.

We are inviting women from the Bridgeview Mosque to partake in fellowship and create greater communication between our groups. Women are encouraged to bring homemade treats. Please contact Pat Segner for more information.

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Any questions? Contact Laurene Lambertino-Urquizo.
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 Friday of the month from 6:30-10:30 pm. More info: Call Dave Matteson 708-672-8837 or (714) 930-6134.

RAINBOW CAFÉ will NOT meet in August.

A Moment in Balance
Yoga Classes by Karen Nielsen
Monday and Thurs
9:30am – 11am
Wednesday evenings
7:00pm – 8:30pm
No reservations needed. Drop-in fee is $10 per class and the 6th one is FREE.

Buddhist Meditation
Learn and enjoy the simple, straight-forward practice of meditation. Please join us for sitting and walking meditation in the Zen and Theravadan Buddhist traditions. This is an ongoing event led by Steve McCabe and Beverly Feldt.

When: Saturdays at 9am to 10:30am
Location: UUCC
Cost: Free Will offering, (proceeds go to UUCC)
Contact: For questions, contact Steve McCabe (708) 465-3116 or Beverly Feldt bevfeldt@gmail.com

Free Healthy Living Group
NO Healthy Living Group in August
(This group may possibly resume in the fall)

Sacred Communication Workshop
August: Dates to be determined. Classes will be via conference calls
Please rsvp to register at Iforgiveforme@gmail.com
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:
3rd Sunday of the month. (Sept-June)
Dances of Universal Peace are held on the 3rd Sunday of the month from 2-4pm at UUCC. We join our voices in singing sacred phrases and Divine Names from many spiritual traditions while moving in circle dances and walking meditations. For more information contact certified dance leader, Pat Segner, at 708-748-2217.
DUP will NOT meet in August

Love to Sing??
Join the UUCC Choir! The Choir sings on the second and fourth Sundays of each month, with rehearsals on those days at 8:30am and one weekday evening per month. No experience required. If interested email our choir director Bev Feldt at bevfeldt@gmail.com.

QiGong with Jim Kobus
Most Thursdays @5pm
(This class will be held typically every Thursday of the month but there will be exceptions so you must send Jim your email if you are interested in participating.)

It is suggested that you not eat before class. Please bring your own water. $5 suggested donation per class.

Qi Gong
Email Jim: emiton1@aol.com
For questions call: 708-799-1925

Please send any ideas, comments or suggestions for the UUCC newsletter to Diane at diane.oconnor@att.net or call 708-758-5715
What’s going on in RE?  by Dan Feldt, Director of RE

Religious Education at UUCC is being transformed both physically and by redefining our purpose. Please take the opportunity to visit the Pre-K home in Classroom 2. Melissa Schwartz has created a warm and inviting space with plenty of fun things to do. There are also plans in the works to rearrange Classroom 1 so the older kids have a more stimulating and welcoming environment.

Going along with the change in décor is a refocusing on the purpose and goals of Religious Education at UUCC. Angela Denk has written a wonderful vision statement for this year’s studies. It says:

“Our goal is to educate children and adults alike in the many traditions, belief systems, and ethical paths that shape our world. From Universal Unitarianism’s Judeo-Christian roots to the Eastern mystic traditions, from Islam to the Earth-based native and modern religions of the world and secular humanism, we will examine their core beliefs and cultural influences through a series of classes, projects, field trips and celebrations. Through this exploration, we will identify the common threads of compassion and moral responsibility that run through them all while we celebrate their discrete nuances and create our own moral and ethical paths to follow on our lives' journeys.”

Melissa has also brought together a group of talented women who are working on the curricula and activities for the RE year. Their meetings have been a terrific combination of energy and organization, with a delicious assortment of doughnuts. The founding mothers would be proud!

I continue to mention Melissa Schwartz with good reason. She is the driving force to this RE Renaissance. She has heard the congregation’s desire to attract young families and has started us dynamically down the path to accomplish that goal.

This congregation should take pride that it’s a place that welcomes people of all ages and encourages the spiritual growth of all seekers.

In faith,
~Dan Feldt, Director of Religious Education

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CORN ROAST  September 12, 2015  4:30pm

We’re planning to have elotes, the same roasted Mexican corn sold by street vendors in Mexico City and Chicago. It’s delicious! To make this happen, we’ll need additional grills. If you have one to lend us for the event, please let me know. Dan Feldt 708-212-3637.

Also, plans are underway to have Nomad Planets provide entertainment again this year!

More details to follow, but mark your calendars for September 12th.
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The Medical Cannabis Education Association meeting is being held on August 2nd at 12 noon in Classroom 1. **This month’s topics will be announced.**

**Attendance is Free!**
This picture was taken in the 1st or 2nd year of our fair presentations. Notice the nuclear power plant in the background. That is the nuclear power plant at Byron, Illinois which is owned by Common Wealth Edison. The solar panels in the foreground are also owned by Common Wealth Edison. The presentation inquires “Which power do you want: solar or nuclear?” Our first year of the fair we estimated that we had 1200 people come to the fair to participate in classes of various stripes about sustainable living. We were new at the whole thing and worked furiously hard getting prepared.

Bob and Sonia Vogl, who are President and Treasurer of IREA (Illinois Renewable Energy Association), are the backbone of this working in its entirety. I am the instigator of everything, but am happy to see someone running it so well. I took a class on “How to run your own energy fair” up in Wisconsin. I had quit my job to stay home with my adopted son Clinton and I paid $200 to take the class. I had asked other people I knew to join me but they struggled with time and money constraints.

3 years later, we had our first energy fair. 14 years later on this August 22nd and 23rd we will have our 14th annual energy fair.

The Illinois Renewable Energy Association (IREA) supports sustainable energy development in Illinois. The IREA provides hands-on opportunities for the Illinois public to learn about the benefits, potentials, and uses of renewable energy and energy-efficiency for our homes and businesses.

Plan on joining us this year at the 14th annual fair on Saturday, August 22nd and 23rd, 2015 at the Ogle County Fairgrounds in Oregon, IL.

http://www.illinoisrenew.org/index.html

Announcement for New Directory

A DRAFT of the new 2015-2016 UUCC Directory will be placed in the Gathering Room on July 26th and through the month of August. PLEASE TAKE A MOMENT TO REVIEW YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION AND (IF NEEDED) MAKE ANY NECESSARY CHANGES. THEN, PLEASE INITIAL YOUR ENTRY TO INDICATE THAT YOU HAVE REVIEWED AND/OR CORRECTED IT. Thank you for your help!
Family to Family is a course for families who are caring for individuals living with mental illness. Our next Family to Family class will start on September 9th and then meet every Monday and Wednesday at 7PM until October 14th at the Sertoma Center, 4331 Lincoln Highway (Rt 30), Matteson, IL. Please contact Len Rentz at 708-310-2038 to register.

Our Family Support Group meets on the 2nd Saturday of each month at 2PM at Advocate South Suburban Hospital, 17800 S. Kedzie in Hazel Crest, IL. Please contact Marianne Bithos at 708-335-4008 if you are planning on attending.

UUCC/Park Forest will host In Our Own Voice, a program in which two speakers share their personal stories about living with a mental illness and achieving recovery. Call Marianne at 708-335-4008 if you would like us to present to a group of people.

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**STOP THE CHOP!**

Gov. Rauner is putting public health, education, child care, and other human needs on the chopping block!

**COMMUNITY FORUM**

Tuesday, August 4, 7:00-9:00 pm
Unitarian Universalist Community Church
70 Sycamore, Park Forest, IL 60466

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**Alliance for Community Services**

INFO@AllianceForCommunityServices.org

*Stop the Chop!*

Fund Human Services!

Disastrous levels of inequality, joblessness, hunger, foreclosure and debt, create a greater demand for human services. The “austerity” approach is unworkable, morally reprehensible and fiscally unnecessary.

**TOWN HALL FORUM** …coming to Unitarian Universalist Community Church, in Park Forest!
**Tuesday, August 4, 2015**
**TIME:** 7:00 P.M. TO 9:00 P.M.

We invite you to join us for a Town Hall Forum, to be presented by Fran Tobin, of Alliance For Community Services.org, “Stop the Chop of Human Services Town Hall Forum.” Fran will explain Governor Rauner’s planned cuts and the services they will affect. Joining him will be Darnece Cooper, President of AFSCME Local 2806. Darnece will give insight as to how workers will be affected by these cuts and will have a few members of her local with her, who will lend their participation, as well. Through this effort, attendees will be well informed, educated and understand what Governor Rauner intends for the people of the State of Illinois. Knowledge is POWER!

Co-sponsoring this event is the Unitarian Universalist Community Church in Park Forest and South Suburban Council for MoveOn.org

We look forward to welcoming and meeting you, in discussion of this very important issue. COME, bring your friends! We’ll have refreshments, too!

For more information: Contact: 815-651-7646
Church Information
70 Sycamore Drive
Park Forest, IL 60466
PHONE: 708-481-5339
E-Mail: admin@uuccpf.org
Web: www.uuccpf.org

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.