

The Uniter

Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Urbana-Champaign



May 5, 2010

Worship Services

May 9

9:30 and 11:15 a.m.

“Of Fundamentals and Fundamentalism”

The Rev. Axel H. Gehrmann

Second Sunday Potluck

May 16

9:30 and 11:15 a.m.

“The Art of Heresy”

The Rev. Axel H. Gehrmann

May 23

9:30 and 11:15 a.m.

“Take Back America?”

The Rev. Axel H. Gehrmann

Our Mission

Build Community.

Seek Inspiration.

Promote Justice.

Find Peace.

Minister's Message

- Axel H. Gehrmann

Tornado warning... Tornado watch... It's that time of year.

Before moving to the Midwest, I never knew the degree to which wind is a force to be reckoned with. Fortunately, I have not had any close encounters with tornados. But even so, enough have touched down around town, that the wind now commands my respect. And even as I marvel at the beauty and splendor of spring, walking the streets on windy days, my appreciation is tinged with apprehension.

The heavenly forces that blow across the prairie this time of year are something. The trees, still unaccustomed, it seems, to their lush new leaves, are carelessly pushed around. As if a giant hand were reaching down from the sky, trying to rearrange the fresh foliage, like messy morning hair.

It is hard to imagine the power of the air. The low rumble sounds like the distant roar of the ocean, only more ominous. It is dizzying to watch the massive tree trunks bounce around as if they were made of rubber. A gust can snap mighty limbs as if they were twigs. Branches unwilling to bend with the breeze lay broken in the road.

When the storm passes, when the wind calms down, I carry on with my regular duties, humbled. Reminded, once again, how much of the world is beyond our control and how vast and unpredictable its powers, my usual preoccupations are put in perspective. I carry on; quietly grateful for the small part I play in a much grander scheme.

See you in church...

You will notice that this week's "Uniter" is being presented in a new format. It was designed to be more accessible and readable. Contact the church office and let us know what you think.

R.E. Matters

-Renee Cogil

The Religious Education Committee and I are making plans for the coming church year. Here is a glimpse at some the exciting opportunities that await our children and youth in the fall:

- Class groupings by age and grade level will remain the same at the first service in the coming year.
- At the second service, a new class is being created, called Journeys, a vibrant multi-age group that provides opportunities for learning across the ages, sharing experiences, and having a chance to be a leader. This class is for children in Kindergarten – 5th grades and replaces our K-2nd grade and 3rd-5th grade classes. The theme of the first 10 weeks will be Celebrating Rainforests, an exciting new curriculum that focuses on our 7th principle. Through stories, songs and music, discussions, hands-on activities, a special social action project, and a rainforest tasting party, students will have a chance to connect with the earth and feel empowered to preserve our planet. The second semester will focus on Unitarian Universalist Super Heroes – a values based curriculum that explores the stories and people of our faith history. Stories, drama, songs and projects help students engage at their own level as they learn the stories of our faith and find ways to live out our religious commitments.
- Also, at the second service, Our Whole Lives, a year long class on human sexuality, will go back to being taught every other year. In the fall 8th and 9th graders will pair up to do a comprehensive coming of age program, Coming of Age: Deepening Ties Within Your Congregation, which celebrates the end of childhood, and welcomes students into a time of transition to adulthood. Youth will explore many “big questions,” their personal values, after-death beliefs, God beliefs, meet with their own mentor, and write a credo statement. Special events and outings make this meaningful experience a lot of fun. This class will go on a retreat (maybe two) and celebrate their Coming of Age in grand fashion.
- For 9th graders not interested in the Coming of Age program there are other options:

help teach a younger class, attend services, serve as a welcomer or usher in services.

As you consider which time your family will attend services in the fall, we hope that you will consider the different classes offered for children and youth at each service. A Prospectus will be available soon.

From the Board Chair

-Cindy Loui

Barely 3 months into my term on the board I very reluctantly agreed to be vice chair when Erich Adickes had to resign due to Tuesday evening teaching responsibilities. Not even knowing what I was doing on the board in general it was with great reluctance that I agreed to be vice chair. I assured the rest of the board that there was no way I would ever be board chair, just wanted them to know that ahead of time. It didn't quite work out that way the next year when everyone on the board had many good reasons why they were not able to be board chair. In agreeing to be board chair I found myself, being inspired by one Randy Locke. In the Spring of 2008 at a forum discussing the Early Service Task Force recommendations, Randy stood up and said, if this is what my church needs me to do then I'll do it. And so, I once again found myself cautiously agreeing to take on a job I didn't think I wanted to do. I can honestly say that it has been an honor and a privilege to serve as board chair. This year has been one of spiritual challenges and growth in a variety of areas. I've been continually awed and inspired by the amazing corps of incredibly dedicated and talented volunteers as well as our wonderful staff. No board ever gets done as much as they want to yet, we set an ambitious agenda this year and we made a lot of good progress working in a thoughtful, respectful manner. I have really enjoyed working with my fellow board members and I am so glad to see another strong cohort of board members joining the board. Thank you all.

Volunteer Corner

-Peggy Patten

Thank you Lay Leaders!

During the worship services on April 25 we recognized our lay leaders—those individuals who provide direction and leadership to the committees, task forces, and special projects that are ongoing at church. Please let the following individuals know you appreciate their leadership this past year.

- Chris Hannauer, chair, Finance Committee
- Dave Sharpe, chair, Stewardship Committee
- Jennifer Green, co chair, Social Action Committee
- Pat Nolan, co chair, Social Action Committee
- Brigitte Pieke, chair, Partner Church Committee
- Bob Strauss, chair, Personnel Committee
- Doug Jones, chair, Membership Committee
- Maryly Crutcher, interim chair, Care Core
- Tom Gillespie, co chair, Property Committee
- Jerry Carden, co chair, Property Committee
- Ann Brodsky, chair, Religious Education Committee
- Sam Beshers, chair, Worship Committee
- Anne Sharpe, chair, Walnut Tree Task Force
- Geoff Levin, chair, Committee on Ministry
- Cathy Cunningham, chair, Service aUuction
- Marsha Clinard, chair, VAHEST (Victor Hoersch Elderly Services Trust)
- Emily Laugesen, chair, Green UUs
- Doug Jones, Denominational Affairs Coordinator
- Karla Peterson, chair, Transition Task Force
- Sally Babbitt, coordinator, Church Archives
- Holt Babbitt, coordinator, UNITER Folder Party
- Ryan Thomas, Web master
- Charlie Boast, chair, Mediation Committee
- Claudia Gross, coordinator Audit Task Force
- Peggy Steele, coordinator, Governance Task Force
- Pamela Van Wyk, coordinator, Policy Book Task Force
- Adelaide Aime, Capital Improvements Task Force

Our Church Family

Joys and Concerns

(This material is not available online.)

Church Announcements

Shared Offering for May: Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation

Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation (LLAF) is a not-for-profit agency that provides free civil legal services to low-income persons and senior citizens in 65 counties (including Champaign County) in central and southern Illinois. Its goals are:

- to promote economic security, adequate shelter and health care;
- to alleviate domestic violence and improve family stability; and
- to advance the interests of vulnerable populations.

LLAF works as independent advocates for its clients. LLLAF handles only certain kinds of civil cases, providing services ranging from telephone advice or brief service, to representation in court or at administrative hearings. The type of service provided depends on the legal problem, the merits of the case, and staff availability.

The kinds of problems LLLAF may be able to help with include:

- Housing - evictions, foreclosures, lock-outs, utility shut-offs, contract for deed problems or trouble getting the landlord or housing authority to make repairs.
- Family - cases for victims of domestic violence, such as orders of protection and divorce; custody cases when the parent who has been child's caretaker is in danger of losing custody; and some divorces. In some areas, we offer self-help clinics on divorce.
- Consumer - debt collection, repossession, garnishments, home improvement problems, and car sales or repair problems.
- Public Benefits and Health - TANF, SSI, General Assistance, Food Stamps, Medicaid or Medicare issues.

- Services for Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons- Also wills and powers of attorney for persons age 60 and over and persons who are HIV positive. Nursing home quality of care issues. (in some counties)
- Education - cases for children with disabilities and for wards of DCFS.

You can find more information about the Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation on its website, www.lollaf.org.

"When justice is accessible to only the privileged few, it is no justice at all." –Moses Harrison, former Chief Justice of the Illinois Supreme Court.

Religious Education Teachers Needed

"Every adult needs a child to teach, it's the way adults learn," said Frank A. Clark. You are invited to learn along side the most wonderful, curious, and extraordinary children and youth. Sign up today to be a religious education for next year. Using a mix of some of our favorite curricula and several new ones hot off the press, we will be offering interesting classes for our youngest to oldest students. A sign up poster is available in Fellowship Hall and Renee Cogil can answer your questions. Your help with teaching is needed and greatly appreciated.

Belated Thank You

To those who purchased items from the Strohecker's pre-Christmas craft sale. (Pot holders and centerpieces)\$1,030.00 was raised for the walnut Welcome Table.

Garden Work Party

Imagine a garden that invites you to "come in" with the sights and smells of nature. Imagine a garden that welcomes butterflies, birds and you with a gathering of native plants and stones. Imagine a garden that reminds you of our UU principles with beautiful stepping stones, each designed and made by our children and youth. Come help create this beautiful garden by signing up for the work party scheduled for Saturday, May 22nd. A sign-up sheet is in Fellowship Hall. A second work party will be scheduled for a weekend evening in June.

Butterfly Garden Native Flower and Grass Donations Needed

Have you noticed the outline of a white butterfly painted on the grass in the playground? This will be our new butterfly garden. When completed, it will be outlined with rocks in the shape of a butterfly, bejeweled with native wild flowers and bordered with native grasses. We need your help to make it come to life! We are seeking donations of native

wild flowers and grasses attractive to butterflies to plant in the garden on Sat. May 22nd. Do you have any of the following wildflower or grass plants that you can donate?

Native Flowers needed: Joe-Pye weed (a short cultivar), Showy goldenrod or other native, non-aggressive goldenrods, Smooth aster, Butterfly weed, Swamp milkweed, Black-eyed Susan, Purple coneflower, Blazing star, Bee balm, Rattlesnake master, Wild indigo (either white, cream and/or blue wild indigo; also known as Baptisia), and Phlox. We need about 240-250 individual plants of these native flowers with about 40 of these being milkweeds such as swamp milkweed and butterfly weed.

We also need 2 plants of Little bluestem grass to form the antenna of the butterfly and 40 plants of Prairie Dropseed grass to border the butterfly. If you can donate plants, please contact Mary Kay Solecki at mksolecki@comcast.net or 688-2931. Plants can be dropped off at church Wed.- Fri. May 19-21 or before 11:00 AM on Sat. May 22nd. Thanks for your help!

Annual Reports Available

For those of you who wish to have one, the Annual Reports are available on the table in the fellowship hall for pick up. If you would like one sent to you in electronic format, please send a message via email to me at admin@uucuc.org. Thanks! Janis Hooper, office administrator.

Church Groups

Adult Discussion Group meets Sundays in the library for a lively discussion of topics ranging from political to religious and beyond. The group meets Sunday mornings at 10:30 a.m. All are welcome! Led by Chuck Cooper.

Bridge Group meets second and fourth Mondays from 1 to 3 p.m. in the Children's Chapel. Their next meeting date is May 10. All levels are welcome. Contact: Barb Mann: barber_mann@yahoo.com.

Feminist Book Group An opportunity to read works by women and to discuss them in a friendly and supportive environment. Meets the 3rd Tuesday of the month, from 7 to 9 pm in the Library. Next meeting is May 18. The book for discussion is "Still Alice" by Lisa Genova. For more information, contact Karen Folk, foxfolk@aol.com or 367-9723.

Gastronomical Society Group hosts themed potluck dinners once a month at a member's home or at a restaurant. This group is open to anyone who loves to cook various ethnic and regional cuisines and to try new things. Contact Emily Sanders (emily@sanders-home.net) for more info.

Green UUs Meets monthly on the second Thursday of the month in the YRUU at 7:30 pm

U.U. Play Group For children from birth to 5 years of age. Join us Fridays from 10:30–12:30 in the nursery. Can't find us? Look for us on the playground. It is a chance for young children to play and socialize, and for adults to meet other UUs. Contact: Renée Cogil, 384-8862 or re-director@uucuc.org.

Women's CommUUnity An informal discussion group for women and an opportunity for quieter, more in-depth discussion and connection. We meet on the fourth Wednesday of each month at 7:15 p.m. in the Library. Join us! Please contact Maryly Crutcher if you would like to be a newcomer to the group: maryly7@comcast.net.

Join a Chalice Circle

Chalice Circles are an opportunity for friends and members of the church to develop deeper connections and wider service within our community through small-group involvement.

Chalice Circle- first and third Thursday of the month, 7:15 pm. Contact Karen Ruhleder for more information (ruhleder@hotmail.com 356- 8190.)

Chalice Circle—second Monday of the month, 7:30 p.m. Contact Elaine Gehrmann (344-2335, Gehrmanns@aol.com).

Caring for Aging Parents and Elders Circle—third Monday of the month, 7 p.m. Contact Karen Retzer or (352-9482).

Writer's Circle—third Thursday of the month, 7:00 p.m. Contact Pat Nolan (384-7477, pnolan96@aol.com)

Sustainable Living/Deep Ecology Chalice Circle Third Friday of the month, 7 -9 p.m., with optional 6:30 dessert potluck. Contact Amy Hassinger: amyhass@gmail.com; 384-7735 or Emily Laugesen: emilys-laugesen@yahoo.com; 384-5921.

How to Reach Us

Office Hours- Mon. - Fri., 9:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
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Geoff Levin, Ministry
Ann Brodsky, Religious Education
Doug Jones, Membership
Brigitte Pieke, Partner Church
Peri Ceperley, Care Core: gethelp@uuc-urbana.org

Calendar

Thursday, May 6

7:15 p.m. Chalice Circle - YRUU
7:30 p.m. Finance Committee, Ch.Chapel

Friday, May 7

10:30 a.m. Playgroup - Nursery

Sunday, May 9

9:30 a.m. Worship & Religious Ed.
11:15 a.m. Worship & Religious Ed.
Second Sunday Potluck
6:00 p.m. Governance Task Force,
Children's Chapel

Monday, May 10

1:00 p.m. Bridge Group, Children's Chapel
& 3:30 p.m. Chalice Circle, YRUU

Tuesday, May 11

7:00 p.m. Board of Trustees, Ch.Chapel

Wednesday, May 12

7:00 p.m. Personnel Comm, SW Classroom
7:15 p.m. Social Action Committee, Library

Thursday, May 13

12:00 p.m. Uniter deadline
6:00 p.m. Governance Task Force,
Children's Chapel
7:00 p.m. War and Peace Book Group,
Children's Chapel

7:30 p.m. Green UU's, YRUU

Friday, May 14

10:30 a.m. Playgroup - Nursery

Sunday, May 16

9:30 a.m. Worship & Religious Ed.
11:15 a.m. Worship & Religious Ed.

Monday, May 17

7:00 p.m. Caring For Aging Parents and
Elders, Library

Tuesday, May 18

7:00 p.m. Feminist Book Group, Library

Publications & Deadlines

Subscribe to our weekly E-Newsletter. Send your name, phone number and email address to toadmin@uucuc.org. To make last minute announcements regarding church related events in the E-News, please send your submission to admin@uucuc.org no later than Thursday, noon. **The Uniter** is published every two weeks from September through May and every three weeks during the holiday season and summer months. Please submit announcements by email to toadmin@uucuc.org. The next submission deadline is Noon, Thursday, May 13, 2010.

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