

The Uniter



*Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Church
of Urbana-Champaign*

March 24, 2010

Our Mission

*Build community.
Seek inspiration.
Promote justice.
Find peace.*

Our Vision

*We dedicate ourselves
to:*

- Expanding religious,
educational, and social
activities that serve
our congregation and
the larger community.*
- Acting on our indi-
vidual and collective
commitment to pro-
mote social justice.*
- Enhancing the diver-
sity of our liberal reli-
gious community.*
- Improving the acces-
sibility and function-
ality of our facilities,
and ensuring that
they are an asset to
our community.*

March 28

9:30 and 11:15 a.m.

"On Pests"

The Green UUs and Amy Hassinger

April 4

9:30 and 11:15 a.m.

"Easter Stories"

An Intergenerational Service

The Rev. Axel H. Gehrmann

April 11

9:30 and 11:15 a.m.

"Person to Person"

The Rev. Axel H. Gehrmann

Second Sunday Potluck

Minister's Corner

-Axel H. Gehrmann

"A cluttered desk is sign of a cluttered mind." This is a quote I once heard, which has stuck with me, I don't know why. Perhaps, because my own desk has a habit of accumulating pieces of paper.

There are post-its from long-ago phone conversations with bits of trivia I didn't want to forget. There is mail that was skimmed and doesn't quite warrant a place in my files, but does contain a piece of worthwhile information that is too precious to be tossed into the trash. There are notes from meetings, some with items pending, others are left on the desktop for quick reference. Then there is the pile of newsletters from other churches, in which I might find some interesting news about my colleagues' activities, or insights about issues with which other churches are grappling similar to our own. However, because I seldom find the time to read them thoroughly, they remain on a pile, patiently awaiting the day they are either opened or thrown out. Over time, the piles on my desk mysteriously seem to multiply, creating an aesthetic that, to the untrained eye, might suggest "disorder."

Another quote I once heard is: "Only genius can afford chaos." I like this one better. It implies that both order and beauty are in the eye of the beholder. It affirms that even though the method of a messy desk's madness isn't easily identifiable, a method may nevertheless exist within the discerning mind. Perhaps it is subtle. Perhaps it is sublime.

March is a busy month for many of us. It is for me. During these busy days, it seems as if the issues and experiences of my life, pile up on one another, creating a clutter of activity verging on chaos. But it doesn't have to be that way.

If we take the time to step back for a moment, and reflect on the big picture of our lives, we may see the method in our madness. We may recognize the clear purpose that runs through all we do like a fine thread.

May we have the wisdom to pause periodically. May we have the vision to pursue our purpose with a calm mind, heedless of any clutter.

See you in church

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Axel".

R.E. Matters

-Renée Cogil

Last week I saw a ladybug and was thrilled. This may sound a bit simplistic, but it was not a long dead, lifeless shell reminding me the abundance of life that was, but rather a living, moving reminder of the return of new life and spring time. The day I encountered this ladybug walking across the church floor, it was still nasty cold outside, and I was particularly encouraged by its presence. Here in the early days of spring when days vacillate between that warm-your-feet-and-soul-gentle-sunshine *and* bundle-up-yet-again-wind-punching-chill a sign of the return of spring can make my heart sing even if it is only 48 degrees, but at least the wind isn't blowing. In perspective, one can be thankful for small things - even ladybugs. For me that tiny insect represents so much more than its small size can ever foretell. It is a harbinger of spring.

Truth be told, the ladybug is not the only thing I feel especially grateful for. Certainly the blooming crocuses and snow drops, and emerging daffodil and tulip leaves are among the things boosting my spirits, as is the recently ice-free stream flowing through our neighborhood where I now let our 6 month old puppy play with carefree abandon.

And, as if there were a synergy conspiring to make all things new the Religious Education Committee and I have been working to create some new opportunities and experiences for spring. In the announcements section of this *Uniter* you will see posted a new five-session class - an Introduction to Tai Chi Chuan. James Geary will lead this introduction. He enjoys a strong Tai Chi practice and has kindly offered to introduce us to a spiritual practice he both enjoys and finds valuable for his life. Also, this spring we are offering an intergenerational workshop on rituals and chalice making. Come learn why rituals are important, how to create meaningful rituals for yourself and family, and make a chalice to take home. Our hand crafted chalices will range from the elegant to the rustic; each will be unique and beautiful and can serve in your rituals at home or work.

We have also been very fortunate to be able to purchase a canvas labyrinth - the same one we have borrowed for our spiritual practices workshops. Creator, Kathe Brinkman, kindly offered to sell us her labyrinth when we contacted her for advice in how to make one of our own. In the coming months we hope to create ways for the curious and the experienced to learn about and experience labyrinth walking.

What joys of spring are blossoming in your life?



From the Board Chair

-Cindy Loui

Upon the recommendation of my nephew, a member of the Secular Student Alliance at Indiana University, I recently read The Unlikely Disciple: A Sinner's Semester at America's Holiest University by Kevin Roose. The author, a Brown University student spent a semester at Liberty University (founded by Jerry Falwell) in order to get to know who evangelical Christians are, to move beyond trite stereotypes and better understand the people and the culture. This is an impressive work by a very thoughtful guy. He neither exploits nor sensationalizes the people, the school or the whole evangelical culture. Roose endeared himself to me by the way he respected "the inherent worth and dignity" of the people he encountered and the way he earnestly explored theological issues. He asks, among other things, What is church? Is it a series of events (candle lighting, hymn singing, offertory, sermon) or is it relationships with people as well as beliefs? What is "the power of prayer"? What is the pull of evangelicalism? Good questions to ponder.

Another thoughtful book, is Acts of Faith by Eboo Patel, an inspiring work by a former University of Illinois student who started Interfaith Youth Core, embodying his belief in the "possibility of pluralism", that the religions of the world should not declare war on each other but on the "ills that afflict all humankind". In a world where fear and destruction in the name of religion is all too common, Patel's voice is a welcome one, one that will leave you inspired and hopeful. Our local "Faith Coalition supporting Safe Haven" is an embodiment of this very sentiment, of people of different faiths finding meaning in working to make the world a better place. There is much work to be done but, as they say, together we can make a difference.



Volunteer Corner

-Peggy Patten

Thanks to our volunteers who assist with Sunday Crew!

Many thanks to those who have volunteered for Sunday Crew tasks during the months of December, January and February: Sally Babbitt, Sam Beshers, Char Brady, Virginia Brubaker, Beth and Stephanie Cobb, Maryly Crutcher, Cathy Cunningham, Nan Ehrlich, Sandy and Joe Finnerty, Colleen Fitzgerald, Kathy and Leon Frizzell, Jennifer Greene, Jim and Sandy Hannum, Marcia Hayes, AJ Herzog, Kristy Higgs, Gail Hueting, Marcy Joncich, Lalita Kalita, Jan Kalmar, Todd Kinney, Lauren Klein, Geoff Levin, Cindy and Michael Loui, Sylvia and Brian McDermott, Suzanne Nagi, Peggy Patten, Karla Peterson, Ursula Reuter-Carlson, Bill Sanders, Gail Schiesser, Sue Schumacher, David and Anne Sharpe, Cliff Singer, Anine Singh-de Grood, Peggy Steele, Charlotte and Patrick Stewart, Chet and Virginia Strohecker, Libby Tyler, Pamela Van Wyk, Lynn Wiley, and Eileen Zemlin.

You can sign up to help with Sunday Crew too!

The Sunday Crew tasks – ushering, welcoming, announcing, providing decorations and hospitality – are easy to do and essential to our Sunday worship services. We are now using VolunteerSpot, a new web service, to help us organize our weekly sign up for Sunday Crew tasks. You can find the VolunteerSpot link on our Church's new Web site at: <http://uucuc.org/sunday-crew>

Once you link to VolunteerSpot you will be asked to enter your email address so the system can send you a link to your personal volunteer page. Once you get that email, you can use the link in it to actually sign up for Sunday Crew. (You'll want to save that email when you get it so that you can use the link whenever you want to sign up in the future.) We have reviewed the site's privacy policy and you do not have to worry about your email address getting shared with anyone. The site uses a calendar format which we think is pretty intuitive, but let Peggy know if you have trouble. Peggy can be reached at: m-patten@sbcglobal.net. Thanks!

Our Church Family

Joys and Concerns

This information is not published on the web.

Church Announcements

Shared Offering for March: NAACP Champaign County Branch

The recipient of our Shared Offering for the month of March is the NAACP Champaign County Branch. The NAACP Champaign County Branch serves the people of Champaign County. Their primary focus is to provide programs and services that promote and enhance civil and equal rights, political empowerment, educational excellence, economic development, and outreach. The Champaign County Branch strives to ensure equal access to all rights, privileges and resources that contribute to the quality of life for the people it serves. The strength of the branch lies with the history of the organization and its membership. The Champaign County Branch is committed to building an organization that is trusted, respected and considered an effective resource for the Champaign County community. The overall goal of the branch is to improve the quality of life for the people it serves.

Safe Haven Collection Continues

We will be continuing to collect goods for the Safe Haven Coalition for the Homeless through the month of March. We have been so touched by the generous donations our congregation has brought in. The needs of this community are still very great, so please, keep bringing in your donations. Our contributions have been extremely well received. Beth Carbonneau who has graciously been transporting all the goods to the Safe Haven Group reports that our church has earned a reputation for generosity among the residents already. Please look for the collection box on the Social Action Table as well as a list of the needed goods.

Thank you so much! Questions? Contact Beth Carbonneau (bcarbonn@illinois.edu) or Cindy Loui (cloui@comcast.net)

UU Coffeehouse a success!

Thanks to all who made the March 13 UU Coffeehouse, our 10th such event, a lot of fun: the many and varied performers, our enthusiastic audience members, those who contributed desserts, and those who assisted with set up and clean up. Thanks to Emil Cobb (husband of Beth Cobb, our Assistant for Services), who posted photos of each UU Coffeehouse act on his Web site for all to view and download. Go to: <http://gallery.me.com/emil52/#100519>



What's next for the UU Coffeehouses?

There have been several good ideas on ways to increase opportunities to deepen our fellowship through the performing arts: music, dance & the spoken word. Going forward, Peggy Patten & Todd Kinney will coordinate the current UU Coffeehouse format only once a year (in February or March). They encourage others at Church to consider coordinating this format or another UU Coffeehouse format at other times during the year. Some of the good suggestions put forward include: 1) hosting a regular community sing-along using the popular *Rise Up Singing* songbook; 2) offering a regular "Open Mic" coffeehouse session; 3) coordinating separate events for storytellers, dancers, or children's entertainment. Let Peggy Patten know if you are interested in providing leadership for these or other UU Coffeehouse ideas.



Change In E-News

Due to a planned absence from the office, no E-News will be delivered on March 26, 2010.

Seeking Auction Photos

Do you have any photos from recent auction events, dinners or activities? Please send digital photos for a photo collage to Cathy Cunningham, ccunham@illinois.edu or call 239-1440.

Spring Has Now Unwrapped the Flowers

Please help decorate the Sanctuary for Easter Sunday, April 4, by bringing your blooming house plant to church that morning. If you have any questions, please contact Beth Cobb, Assistant for Services at bethac54@comcast.net. (Plants will need to return to their homes after the service.)

Canaan Credit Union

UU principles call for us to serve and invest in our community. Through the Canaan Credit Union, we now have another significant way to literally invest our money in our own local community. A credit union operates just like a bank: customers open savings accounts and take out loans. The difference is that the credit union is owned by its customers. Its mission is not to make a profit, but to serve the financial needs of its members.

The Canaan Credit Union was established by the Canaan Baptist Church in 2001. Not for profit, not for charity, but for service to the community. They make loans to people who need them but are unable to qualify at traditional banks, or who can only get money at painfully high interest rates. That is, they are serving people who are denied service from mainstream financial institutions. In addition, part of the Canaan Credit Union's mission is to run workshops to educate their membership in money issues: how to save and how to borrow responsibly.

Under its state charter, membership is open to the congregations of any church in the Credit Union's field of membership. We have recently been added to this list so members and friends of the UU are now eligible to join.

Savings deposits pay a nominal 0.25% interest and are federally insured by the National Credit Union Administration up to \$250,000.

Interested in putting your savings to work in service to our local community? Credit Union staff and the social action committee members will be accepting account applications after both services on the 28th of March. All it takes is a photo id and \$20 to get started. Alternatively, you can also stop by the Credit Union's offices at 404 West Main Street in Urbana. They are open between 8 am to 4:30pm Monday through Friday. The office is also open between 12:30 and 12:45 on Sundays. How many other banks can you visit after church?

For more information call the Credit Union at 367-2158, or contact Ben Galewsky (ben@peartreestudio.net, 384-2033).

Upcoming Events

Circle Suppers are Here!

Get to know others at Church in a relaxed social setting. Plan to attend one of our Circle Suppers. Circle Suppers are shared potluck meals that take place in members' homes. The next two Circle Supper dates are Saturday, March 27 and Sunday, April 18. Deadline to submit your form is March 21 (for the March 27 Circle Supper) and April 11 (for April 18 Circle Supper). Pick up a blank Circle Supper form and return your completed form on the minister's doorway in Fellowship Hall. Forms are also available on the Church's Web site. Questions? Contact Gail Schiesser, gail@illinihypnosis.com or Virginia Brubaker, 217-819-6635.

That's Amore! UU Service Auction

Have you bought your tickets yet for "That's Amore!", the Italian-themed, all-church party and service auction on April 17th? Have you thought of a donation you might be able to provide to support the church? Now is the time to buy your ticket and pick up or turn in those forms! Be sure to stop by the Auction table after the 9:30 and 11:15 services. You can also download a form off the Church's home page. This is a great way for you to have fun, support the church and plan your social events for the year. Childcare will be provided the night of the auction. Donation forms received by March 28th will be included in the pre-auction list appearing in the next issue of the Uniter. Thanks!!!

Questions and Answers on UUism

On **April 4**, following the worship service, the minister will offer a brief orientation to Unitarian Universalism and this church in his office. The session is informal and designed to answer your questions, whatever they may be. Everyone is welcome, whether you are new to the church or have been attending for a while.

Family Workshop - Rituals and Chalice Making

Do you ever wish you could light a chalice at dinnertime but don't know what to say? Would you like to have more rituals in your life to add meaning to your days and deepen your UU faith? If so, join us Tuesday, April 20th, 7:00-8:15 for an evening of UU Rituals and Chalice Making. We will learn about the role of rituals in our lives and how to create rituals. We will also have the opportunity to make a family chalice and learn some chalice lightings. Adults, bring your kids. Kids, bring your adults. Don't have kids? - Just come! Everyone is welcome! Please sign up in Fellowship Hall.

Tai Chi

Join us for an introduction to Tai Chi Chuan, a Chinese martial art that finds stillness within movement, calm within action. This five session class will be comprised of sitting and walking meditation, some warm-up exercises, the practice of a few basic tai chi moves, and a reading from the Tao Te Ching. If there is further interest after this simple introduction to Tai Chi, a longer course may be offered during autumn, with the goal of learning a full form to practice. Join us on Saturday mornings, April 10 to May 8; from 9 a.m.-11 a.m.. Eat a light meal one hour prior to practice, wear loose, comfortable clothing and shoes with rubber soles, and please bring an exercise mat or thin pillow for meditation. James Geary will lead the class. He has a strong daily Tai Chi practice and has participated in extensive Tai Chi training in Thailand where he lived for two years. To attend please sign up in Fellowship Hall.

Easter

We seek life's meaning in the wonder of
morning
In the freshness of springtime,
And in each others hearts and minds.
Yet still we hope for something more,
 A break in the ordinary,
 An infusion of the unexpected,
 An explosion of glory,
A miracle,
 Revealing more than we hope to understand.

Charles F. Flagg



Denominational Affairs

General Assembly, A Meeting of Congregations

General Assembly 2010 Minneapolis, Minnesota June 23-27

Now Open:

- Registration (Adult, Youth, and Children's Registration, Volunteer and Scholarship Applications, and Accessibility Services)
- Housing Reservations

Join thousands of Unitarian Universalists (UUs) from across the United States for the 2010 General Assembly (GA) in Minneapolis. You'll experience wonderful and uplifting worship services – morning and night – led by some of our best worship leaders, with glorious music and inspiring messages. Worshipping together with thousands of fellow UUs at our Sunday Worship Service is an experience that should not be missed.

General Assembly is the way that our faith does business. Actions of social witness are passed at GA, elements that make up future policies are discussed... and YOU have a voice in the discussion. You'll hear terrific speakers. There will be hundreds of entertaining programs and informative workshops, offering excellent support and learning for leaders in our congregations. You'll be able to join the witness for our faith and values, in moving and exciting ways.

Minneapolis is an ideal setting for GA. It is a progressive, culturally diverse, LGBT friendly city that is rich in cultural arts and has a stunning natural environment. There are 900 lakes and 170 parks within the Twin Cities area.

New Media and Social Networking

We have initiated a new media campaign to use a variety of tools to reach out to our UU friends, to disseminate information, and to get people excited about GA!

Subscribe to our GA Blog

Listen to our Audio Podcast

Follow us on Twitter

Become our fan on Facebook

Contact Us

Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) General Assembly & Conference Services professional staff coordinate logistics such as registration, housing, the exhibit hall, services to our attendees prior to General Assembly, and the GA Program. Contact General Assembly & Conference Services Office Staff.

Visit <http://www.uua.org/events/generalassembly> for more information.

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 **April 12**. 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 April 20**. The book for discussion is "Fair and Tender Ladies" by Lee Smith. 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.

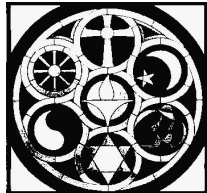
Chalice Circle - first and third Thursday of the month, 7:15 pm. Contact Karen Ruhleder for more information (ruhleder@hotmail.com 356-8190.)

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: emily-laugesen@yahoo.com; 384-5921.



Subscribe to our weekly E-News letter. Send your name, phone number and email address to admin@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 admin@uucuc.org. The next submission deadline is Noon, **Thursday, April 1, 2010.**

Calendar of Church Events - 2010			
Date	Time	Event	Location
Thursday, 3/25	7:00 p.m.	Chalice Leaders	YRUU
Friday, 3/26	10:30 a.m.	Playgroup	Nursery
Sunday, 3/28	9:30 a.m. 11:15 a.m.	Worship Service	Sanctuary
Thursday, 4/1	12:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m. 7:15 p.m. 7:30 p.m.	Uniter Deadline Personnel Committee Chalice Circle Finance Committee	Library YRUU Children's Chapel
Friday, 4/2	10:30 a.m.	Playgroup	Nursery
Sunday, 4/4	9:30 a.m. 11:15 a.m.	Worship Service	Sanctuary
Monday, 4/5	7:30 p.m.	Worship Committee	Library
Tuesday, 4/6	7:00 p.m.	Property Committee	SW Classroom
Wednesday, 4/7	7:00 p.m.	Membership Committee	Fellowship Hall
Thursday, 4/8	7:00 p.m. 7:30 p.m.	War and Peace Book Group Green UUs	Children's Chapel YRUU



**The Unitarian Universalist Church
of Urbana-Champaign**
309 W. Green St., Urbana, IL 61801-3221
(217) 384-8862 uucuc.org

Elected Officers (BOT = Board of Trustees member)

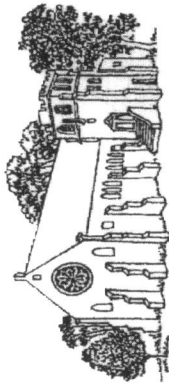
Cindy Loui, BOT	Chair	May, 2010
Teresa Jones, BOT	Treasurer	May, 2010
Anne Newman, BOT	Clerk	May, 2011
Gail Heuting, BOT	Worship Committee	May, 2010
Pamela Van Wyk, BOT	Finance Committee	May, 2012
Anne Sharpe, BOT	Property Committee	May, 2011
Peggy Steele, BOT	Social Action Committee	May, 2012
Cynthia Hoyle, BOT	Personnel Committee	May, 2011
Cindy Ingold, BOT	Vice Chair, Ministry	May, 2010
Chris Carlson, BOT	Membership Committee	May, 2011
Jesse Spencer-Smith, BOT	Moderator	May, 2010
Amy Robison	Financial Secretary	May, 2011

Committee Chairs

Chris Hannauer, Finance
 Bob Strauss, Personnel
 Sam Beshers, Worship
 Emily Laugesen, Green UUs
 Tom Gillespie and Jerry Carden, Property
 Jennifer Greene and Pat Nolan, Social Action
 Geoff Levin, Ministry
 Ann Brodsky, Religious Education
 Doug Jones, Membership
 Brigitte Pieke, Partner Church
 Peri Ceperley, Care Core: gethelp@uuc-urbana.org

Staff

Axel Gehrmann, Minister minister@uucuc.org
 Tues, Wed, Fri: 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
 Renée Papini Cogil, re-director@uucuc.org
 Director of Religious Education
 Tues-Thurs: 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., call ahead
 Janis Meesey: Office Administrator admin@uucuc.org
 Mon-Fri: 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
 Fred Stoltzfus, Choir Director fstoltzf@illinois.edu
 Kent Conrad, Music Director kconrad@rocketmail.com
 Beth Cobb, Assistant for Services bethac54@comcast.net
 Elsa Holden, Childcare Coordinator eholden2@illinois.edu
 Myron Winkler, Sexton
 Jacob Sicinski, Sunday Sexton



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