

The Uniter



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

March 25, 2009

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 29

9:30 a.m. and 11:15 a.m.

"All God's Children"

The Rev. Axel H. Gehrmann

April 5

9:30 a.m. and 11:15 a.m.

"White Lies, White Truths"

The Rev. Axel H. Gehrmann
and Members of our Anti-Racism Group

April 12

9:30 a.m. and 11:15 a.m.

"Easter Stories"

An Intergenerational Service
The Rev. Axel H. Gehrmann
Second Sunday Potluck

Minister's Corner

– *The Rev. Axel H. Gehrmann*

What shape would you like our church facilities to take in the future? This is a question two Task Forces of the church are asking you to reflect on in the weeks ahead. Your answers will affect a decision we, as a congregation, are likely to make at our Annual Meeting on Sunday, May 3rd.

Some history: In 2001 we conducted a very successful Capital Campaign, which allowed us to make significant building renovations. The Children's Chapel downstairs, and a new Fellowship Hall, kitchen and restrooms upstairs are some of the more visible improvements. That same year, the small white house adjacent to our church parking lot, at 310 W. High Street, was up for sale, and the church voted to purchase it. At the time, we had a clear sense of how we would put it to good short-term use. For the duration of church construction from 2002-03 we moved church offices into the High Street house.

Ever since the offices were moved back into the church, the High Street house has been rented, generating a modest income, which has been reserved to pay for the final disposition of the house. We have yet to make a decision on our long-term plans for the High Street property. This year the Board of Trustees charged a Task Force, chaired by Anne Sharpe, to gather information and your thoughts about various options, and to present the matter to the congregation for a vote. (Please see the item on p. 6 for more information, or contact Anne.)

This year another Board Task Force has been active: the Facilities Assessment Task Force, chaired by Marty Williams. Their charge is drawn from one of the five objectives defined in our congregational Strategic Plan (which can be found on our website, or a copy requested from the church office.):

Improving the accessibility and functionality of our facilities, and ensuring that they are an asset to our community.

- *Conduct an assessment to address the regular and deferred maintenance, accessibility, and space needs for the church, looking for opportunities to include energy efficiency in building upgrades and equipment replacement.*

In this *Uniter* you will find an insert developed by the Facilities Assessment Task Force, to gather your thoughts on our current space needs, and how we might best address them in the future. Please carefully consider the questions asked, and provide your ideas.

As you can imagine, the work of these two Task Forces is closely related, and both are connected to our over-arching vision for the future of our church home.

Our mission is clear. We want to *build community, seek inspiration, promote justice, find peace*. Part of our vision involves creating a welcoming physical space where we can gather to fulfill our mission. We need your insights and involvement to help create a plan of action that best serves the needs of our whole religious community. Please pitch in!

See you in church,

Axel

Volunteer Coordinator Corner

– Peggy Patten

Recognizing our Unsung Stewards There are many individuals who volunteer their time at Church, often the behind the scenes in quiet, invisible ways. The following individuals volunteer their time to prepare our *Uniter* newsletter for mailing every two weeks. Let them know you appreciate their help next time you see them.



Thanks to our Uniter folding party volunteers:

Holt Babbitt, who coordinates the group effort, and to Marcy Joncich, Maryly Crutcher, , Dick Harvey, Alice & Lin Foote, Beth Carbonneau, Jim Kuypers, and Doug Clough!



If you know someone deserving of our “unsung steward” recognition, let Peggy Patten know at: m-patten@sbcglobal.net or 337-5668.

*Urbana Universalism begins 150 years ago
Lincoln defends our doctrine*

Our current church can trace its history back to the beginnings of two distinct churches – the Universalist Church, which organized in May of 1859, and the Unitarian Church which organized in February of 1907. The two Churches formally merged in 1957.

The Universalists started a Sunday School in 1858, three years after the city of Urbana was chartered. The Universalists' "Sabbath School" was started to teach the liberal views of "universal salvation" and the innate goodness of man. The earliest ministers – the Rev. W.W. King and Rev. T.C. Eaton – were circuit riders. Rev. King participated in a series of debates on the court house lawn with Methodist minister Rev. Davies. These debates spurred interest in a "free" church.

On May 17, 1859 the First Universalist Church of Urbana, Illinois was formally organized with 56 charter members. They called Rev. Timothy Eaton as their minister. During these early years they met in homes. Early attending the church as a visitor, a friend of some of the member families, and as a political campaigner was Abraham Lincoln. When he was criticized by evangelist Peter Cartwright for participating in a Universalist service, Lincoln replied, "Parson, I used to think that it took the smartest kind of man to uphold and defend Universalism, but now I think differently, for I believe it is the easiest doctrine to defend I have yet heard." The early church became involved in the burning issue of the day: slavery vs. abolition.

Shortly after the formation of the church, Rev. Eaton had to go back East to seek medical attention for his wife, the Civil War broke out, and drought conditions prevailed in the region. Following these troubles, Universalism spread in the rural areas of America as a reaction to the rampant evangelism of the day. In 1869, four years after the Civil War had ended, the church was able to call a minister at a salary of \$800 a year. Around this same time another important institution in our local history – the University of Illinois – was founded with the first students enrolled in the 1870s. Watch the next Uniter for information on the first church building.

Church Announcements

🌀Important Message From The Finance Committee🌀

The finance committee met to make a first draft of next year's budget. The Stewardship Drive thus far has raised slightly less money for the coming year than we raised last year. This means that we probably will not be able to give our staff raises or make progress on our other strategic goals. If you have not yet returned your pledge form, please do so as soon as possible so that we can include your pledge in our budget calculations. If you have already returned your form but are in a position to increase your pledge to help us meet our goals, please consider doing so. In these difficult economic times, we appreciate more than ever the donations of our members that help to make our church home the refuge that it is. Chris Hannauer, Chair, Finance Committee.

🌀It's Playground Time!🌀

With the warmer weather our children are again headed outside to play on the playground. Please help keep the children safe by always making sure there is an adult outside to supervise the children. By working together we can help keep our children safe.

🌀High Street Task Force Progress🌀

Stop by the information table in the Fellowship Hall after the services on **March 29** to learn more about the High Street Task Force's progress. Share your comments about the ideas presented with the members of the task force at the table. We hope to schedule a forum on April 5 for further discussion. At the May 3 congregational meeting you will have the opportunity to vote on a property-use recommendation prepared by the High Street Task Force.

🌀UUs Helping UUs: a new bulletin board resource🌀

Do you have a service (e.g. music lessons, babysitting, sewing, carpentry, plumbing or landscaping) or a resource (e.g. used furniture, equipment or bicycles) to share with others at our Church? Are you interested in car pooling on Sunday mornings? Check out the new "UUs Helping UUs" bulletin board in Fellowship Hall -- the bulletin board next to the men's restroom. Contact Peggy Patten, Volunteer Coordinator, atm-patten@sbcglobal.net or 337-5668 with your questions or comments about the new bulletin board.

(continued)

🌀 In time for Spring 🌀

How to Clean for Healthy People and a Healthy Planet Join church member Patrick Stewart for a presentation and discussion on cleaning and your health from 10:30 until noon on **Saturday, April 4** in Fellowship Hall. Learn how to avoid toxins in cleaning products, and explore common misconceptions about how and why to clean. Questions? Contact Emily Laugesen (emilyslaugesen@yahoo.com).

🌀 Bring a Friend to Church Sunday: April 19 🌀

Like most churches, we get a few visitors who come to our church on their own, but many more visit and join our church because they have been invited by someone. Consider inviting a friend, neighbor, co-worker, or family member to church on Sunday, April 19th. The Membership Committee and our minister, Axel Gehrman, are planning to make that Sunday of particular interest to newcomers and visitors. Think about those you know who could benefit from what our church has to offer and invite them to come to church with you on **April 19th**.

April Shared Offering

Champaign County Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)
CASA is a not-for-profit organization that trains and monitors volunteers who **advocate for the best interests of abused and neglected children**. Every child deserves a safe, loving, permanent home, and this is CASA's ultimate goal. CASA is the guardian ad litem (GAL) for children in Champaign County. CASA provides these children with an attorney to represent their best interests at every hearing, but it is not possible to provide every child with an individual advocate.

A juvenile judge appoints CASA advocates to the most difficult cases. The children who come to CASA have all been removed from risky, unstable environments -- often from families with a long history of domestic violence, drug abuse, and/or mental illness. These children are traumatized. Their world has been torn apart. Frequently their temporary placements don't work out, and they have to move from one place to another. It takes an average of three years to get a case resolved, although some go on for much longer. Often the advocate may be the one constant adult presence in their life while they are in the foster care system. CASA volunteers are actively involved in their assigned cases, adopting roles that include not only advocacy, but also frequent contact with the children and caregivers, and coordinating meetings with involved parties. In addition to working toward finding safe, permanent

homes for these children, CASA strives to help them tap into community resources that can provide the support they need to succeed in school, gain self-esteem, and start looking toward a brighter future. These children are eligible for many community programs, but if they do not have a CASA volunteer looking out for them, they may not get connected with those resources. Advocates work to ensure that a support system is in place, and that the children are receiving all the services they need. GAL contracts from the County fund one-quarter of CASA's budget. The remainder comes from donations and grants which must be continually renewed.

Upcoming Events

Orientation to Unitarian Universalism

Are you new to this church? Have you recently signed the membership book, or are you considering joining? Would you like to learn more about Unitarian Universalism? Axel Gehrmann will offer a three-part orientation on **Wednesday, April 1, 8, and 15, at 7 p.m.** in the Children's Chapel. The first session will focus on individuals' religious journeys. The second will discuss UU history, beliefs, and polity. The third will explore the various groups and activities of this particular church. If you are interested, please sign up on the sheet near the minister's office, call the church office, or email Axel (minister@uuc-urbana.org).

Questions and Answers on UUism On **Sunday, April 5**, following both worship services, the minister will offer a brief orientation to Unitarian Universalism and this church in his office. The sessions are 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 awhile.

The Gastronomical Society, a fancy name for a themed potluck, will be on **Saturday, April 11** at 6:00 p.m. at our home. All church members and friends are invited. This month the theme will be Island food, with you deciding which islands. We'll be providing New Zealand lamb, so think of an island food you'd like to bring. The island is up to you--Hawaiian, Caribbean, Madagascar, British, Taiwan, etc. Just bring a label for your dish showing it's name and which island the cuisine is from. Please RSVP to sandyfinnerty@gmail.com or 356-9635 and let us know what you'll be bringing. Sandy and Joe Finnerty, 3302 Stoneybrook Dr., Champaign.

Caribbean CrUUise! Have you bought your tickets yet for “Caribbean CrUUise”, the all-church party and service auction on **April 18**? Have you thought of a donation you might be able to provide to support the church? Now is the time to “book” your ticket and turn in those forms! The All Aboard! travel agency (Auction table) will be open for business every Sunday after the 9:30 and 11:15 services. This is a great way for you to have fun, support the church and plan your social events for the year. Donation forms need to be turned in by **March 29** to be included in the pre-auction list appearing in the next issue of the Uniter. For more information, contact CrUUise co-directors Cathy Cunningham or Emily Sanders. Thanks!!

Resiliency Workshop for Adults We’ve all been battered or bruised at one time or another by emotional hardships, but some people wade through these treacherous waters with greater ease than others. Come join us in this workshop that focuses on ways to build resiliency in our lives. Jim Hannum will lead an exploration of techniques, practices and tips that help individuals get through the tough times that are encountered in life -- the death of someone close, a tragedy, the loss of a friendship, loss of a job, etc. The workshop will be held on **Sunday, April 19th**, 12:30 -2:00PM in Children's Chapel. So that we may know how many people to expect, please sign up by contacting Renee Cogil, at [re-director@uuc-urbana.org](mailto:redirector@uuc-urbana.org). Lunch will be provided. We hope to see you there!

Seven Score + Ten Years Celebration: May 30, 2009 On **Saturday, May 30** our church is having a celebration commemorating 150 years since the founding of the Universalist Church in Urbana. This article on page 5 is the first in a series of articles on our Universalist church history. It covers the Universalist church formation up to the early 1870’s. The articles include information from *A History: The Unitarian Universalist Church of Urbana-Champaign* published in 1982 along with local news articles researched by members of the Triple Anniversary Planning Committee: Sally Babbitt, Jerry Carden, Karen Folk, Gail Hueting, Marcy Joncich, Doug Jones, Peggy Patten, and Elaine Rockett.

Our Church Family

Joys and Concerns

are not available online

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 - fourth Thursday of the month, at **noon**. contact Emily Laugesen (384-5921, Emilyslaugesen@yahoo.com)

Next Meeting: **March 26**.

Chalice Circle - first and third Thursday of the month. Contact Geoff Levin (384-1827, glevin@insightbb.com)

Next Meeting: **April 2**, 7:15 p.m.

Chalice Circle – second Monday of the month, Contact Elaine Gehrmann (344-2335, Gehrmanns@aol.com).

Next Meeting: **April 13**, 7:30 p.m.

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

Next Meeting: **April 16**, 7:00 p.m.

Caring for Aging Parents and Elders Circle – third Monday of the month, 7 p.m. Contact Cindy Loui (344-9151, cloui@comcast.net)

Next Meeting: **April 20**, 7:00 p.m.

Church Groups

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

Bridge Group meets from 1 to 3 p.m. the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month in the Children's Chapel. All levels of players are welcome. Contact: Barb Mann at barber_mann@yahoo.com.

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! Contact: Maryly Crutcher at maryly7@comcast.net.

U.U. Play Group For children from birth to 5 years of age. Join us Thursdays from 9:30-11:00 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 redirector@uuc-urbana.org.

Community Events

Articulating Your UU Faith Wednesday, April 1 - May 6, 7-8:30pm (no class on April 15) **Channing-Murray Foundation** Campus minister Elizabeth Marsh will offer a 5-session course focusing on practicing how and what to say in various settings in which you might be called upon to declare yourself religiously or illuminate some part of the liberal, progressive religious tradition. The class will provide hopeful inspiration and resources for people currently UUs and for people interested in Unitarian Universalism. **Pre-registration is require* and there is a \$5 materials fee. Please contact Elizabeth at intern@channingmurray.org

The Rainbow Path 2nd and 3rd grade 9:30 RE class is holding a food drive! Please help us feed the hungry in our community by bringing non-perishable foods to church on **Sunday, April 5th**. We will have bins available in Fellowship Hall where you can deposit your food items. Some ideas for foods to bring: bags of rice, pasta, canned fruits and vegetables, peanut butter, jelly. Please do not bring: ice cream, meat, fresh fruit, or live animals. All foods will be donated to the Eastern Illinois Food Bank. Thank you in advance! Amy Hassinger at amyhass@gmail.com

Social Justice Program at Channing Murray (corner of Mathews and Oregon) Screening of the documentary: Kilowatt Ours **Wednesday, April 15 - 7:15pm**. The filmmakers in this documentary share a plan to eliminate their use of coal and nuclear power at home by employing energy conservation, energy efficiency and renewable energy sources. Discover how you can save hundreds of dollars annually on energy bills and use a portion of the savings to purchase renewable energy! The film invites viewers to help build a net zero nation. Free and open to the public. Followed by discussion led by Prof. Angus Rockett. Refreshments will be served.

To Tickle Your Funny Bone

Once Upon A Time

One upon a time, two UUs were having a heated theological discussion. One said, "Unitarians are so badly educated when it comes to the Bible."

"We are not," the other argued.

"Oh yeah?" said the first UU. "I'll bet you can't even recite the Lord's Prayer."

Each one slammed down five dollars, and the second UU said:

*"Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep
If I should die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take."*

And the first UU said, "You win."

- from "The Church Where People Laugh :A Treasury of Jokes, Quotations Observations, and True Stories about Unitarians, Universalists, and U.U.s" compiled and edited by Gwen Foss

Would you like to subscribe to our weekly E-News letter? If so, please send your name, phone number and email address to admin@uuc-urbana.org. If you would like to advertise in the E-News, please send your submission to admin@uuc-urbana.org, no later than Friday, 9:00 a.m.

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@uuc-urbana.org. **We are now back on the normal two-week schedule.** The next submission deadlines are Noon, **Thursday, April 2** and Noon, **Thursday, April 16.**

Calendar of Church Events - 2009

Date	Time	Event	Location
Thursday 3/26	12:00 noon	Chalice Circle (E. Lauge- sen)	YRUU
	7:00-9:00 p.m.	Sustainable Champaign County (C. Connor)	Fellowship Hall
Sunday 3/29	9:30 a.m. and 11:15 am	Sunday Services (A. Gehrmann)	Sanctuary
Tuesday 3/31	7:00-9:00 p.m.	Chalice Leaders	YRUU
Wednesday 4/1	4:30-7:30 p.m.	Safe School Project (E. Gehrmann)	Children's Chapel
	7:00 p.m.	Orientation to UU (A. Gehrmann)	SW Classroom
	7:00 p.m.	Membership Committee	Fellowship Hall
	7:00-9:00 p.m.	Choir Practice	Sanctuary
Thursday 4/2	7:00-9:00 p.m.	Parents As Spiritual Guides (R. Cogil)	Child Care Room
	7:15 p.m.	Chalice Circle (G. Levin)	Offsite
Sunday 4/5	9:30 a.m. and 11:15 am	Sunday Services (A. Gehrmann)	Sanctuary
Monday 4/6	1:00-3:00 p.m.	Bridge Group	Children's Chapel

**The Unitarian Universalist Church
of Urbana-Champaign**
309 W. Green St., Urbana, IL 61801-3221
(217) 384-8862 <http://www.uuc-urbana.org>

Elected Officers (BOT = Board of Trustees member)

Karen Retzer, BOT	Chair	May 2009
Teresa Jones, BOT	Treasurer	May 2010
Brian McNurlen, BOT	Property	May 2010
Frank Knowles, BOT	Worship	May 2009
Anne Sharpe, BOT	Social Action	May 2011
Karla Peterson, BOT	Personnel	May 2009
Cynthia Hoyle, BOT	Finance	May 2011
Cindy Loui, BOT	Vice Chair, Ministry	May 2010
Catherine Connor, BOT	Clerk, Lease	May 2009
Cindy Ingold, BOT	Religious Education	May 2010
Chris Carlson, BOT	Membership	May 2011
Jesse Spencer-Smith, BOT	Moderator	May 2010
Elaine Rockett	Financial Secretary	May 2009

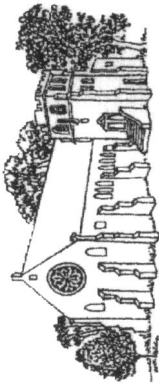
Committee Chairs

Chris Hannauer, Finance
 Bob Strauss, Personnel
 Sam Beshers, Worship
 Emily Laugesen, Green UUs
 Tom Gillespie and Angela Thomas, Property
 Jennifer Greene and Eileen Zemlin, Social Action
 Claudia Gross, Ministry
 Mary Kay Solecki, Religious Education
 Elaine Gehrmann and Doug Jones, Membership
 Brigitte Pieke and Peggy Steele, Partner Church
 Peri Ceperley, Care Core: gethelp@uuc-urbana.org

Staff

Axel Gehrmann, Minister Tues, Wed, Fri: 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.	minister@uuc-urbana.org
Renée Papini Cogil, Director of Religious Education Tues-Thurs: 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., call ahead	re-director@uuc-urbana.org
Patricia Shell: Office Administrator Mon-Fri: 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.	admin@uuc-urbana.org
Fred Stoltzfus, Choir Director	fstoltzf@illinois.edu
Kent Conrad, Music Director	kconrad@rocketmail.com
Beth Cobb, Assistant for Services	bethac54@comcast.net
Stephanie Cobb, Childcare Coordinator	s-cobb@comcast.net

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