



OCTOBER 2015

Unichord

THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF ELGIN



We Want More Labyrinth Events

As the Wheel of the Year turns, we look back with satisfaction over the last six months of warmth and growth we've experienced since the Spring Equinox. Fortunately, none of that growth is occurring in the labyrinth since Green

walk the sacred path to the center and back out again while dew still sparkled on the grass. We also had two very successful Moonlight Walks with drumming and bonfire dancing over the summer.



T Lawn Care Services has done an excellent job of treating it to keep our sacred rock garden pristine and in perfect condition for walking. Some of us undertook and enjoyed a few early morning labyrinth walks on Sunday mornings before worship service this summer. There was a delicious stillness and silence except for birds singing as we entered the outdoor stone cathedral of the Earth Wisdom Labyrinth to

On Sunday, October 4 at 12:15 p.m. there will be a meeting on the third floor of the church to discuss planning and organizing future Labyrinth events. Please come and share your ideas for how to use this sacred space so we can share it with others at UUCE and the larger community of Elgin and beyond. The last public event of this year will be the annual Candlelight Labyrinth Walk to Remember the Ancestors and Beloved Departed on All Saints Day; Sunday, November 1 at 6:00 p.m. Don't forget to bring your candle in a jar and drummers are invited to bring their drums to accompany the walk. We'll have coffee and snacks in the Fellowship Hall afterwards.

—Submitted by
[Sandy Russel](#)

Wheel of Life

Please join us in welcoming Aiden Rune Yucuis into the world. He was born September 23 at 2:39 p.m., weighing in at 8 pounds and 2 ounces and was 20.5 inches long. Congratulations to the Yucuis family!



Minister's Meditation



After a month of exploring “Invitation” – letting in – our thematic calendar now turns to “Letting Go.” What is it in our lives that needs clearing out? What changes are happening that we just aren’t ready for yet? What messages are we internalizing that get in the way of our ability to live the good life? What relationships have we lost, and where do we find the space to grieve?

The autumn equinox has passed, and we’re easing over the balance point where the darkness lasts longer than the day. The leaves are just starting to change color, a beautifully wistful moment in the wheel of the year. In many ways, this is the perfect time for us to reflect on release – the time for things to fall away.

Mary Oliver’s poem “In Blackwater Woods” is the perfect seasonal accompaniment to this theme. She reminds us that “to live in this world, you must be able to do three things.”

First, we must “love what is mortal.” No matter where we are in life, we are surrounded by the transience of all things – the beauty of the seasons; the people that come and go; the animals that comfort and enrich our lives. To live in this world, deeply and fully, means that we must offer our hearts to these things, even though we know (sometimes because we know) that they will not last forever.

We do this because we aren’t really living if we don’t give away part of our hearts to that which will not – and cannot – last. This is why, once we love mortal things, we must learn to “hold it against our bones knowing our own life depends on it.” Our strength comes from our relationships, our sense of belonging in this place. And just as we give our love to things that pass out of our lives, so too do those other mortals give part of their own hearts into our keeping.

And then the hard part, the one we all struggle with – “and when the time comes to let it go, to let it go.”

How do we know when that time has arrived? How can we be sure that letting go is the right choice, when maybe what we really need to do is hold on tighter, try harder, stick it out just a little bit longer?

Those are the questions that no one can answer for you. But when we have those loving, mortal relationships – when there are people whose counsel we trust, and whose support we know we can rely on – sometimes those people can hold us through the time of doubt, sit with us as we sift through the questions without adding their own opinions, and help us find the quiet space where we can hear that voice still and small, whispering, “Yes.”

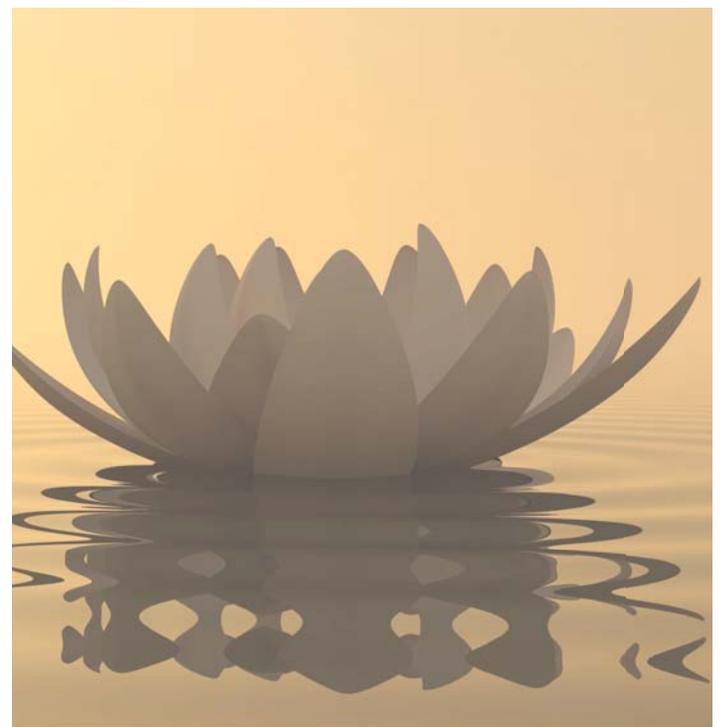
May we strive to be these companions to one another as we live, love, and learn to let go.

With love,

Leslie

Leslie Mills

Minister



WWHD?

Henny DuBois, who coordinates the church's donations to the All People's Inter-Faith Pantry, hasn't been feeling well lately. In honor and celebration of her stewardship, let's be extra generous this month! If each member donates just one item, over a hundred gifts will fill the donation bin, which is located in Fellowship Hall near the west windows. Canned goods, cereal, jelly, and peanut butter are always welcome.

Panty Sunday is October 4, but your donations are welcome any time. Many thanks!

Care Team

The Care Team coordinates the church's efforts in caring for members and friends at significant and/or vulnerable times in their lives. Contact [Leslie Yoshitani](#) with such concerns.

A Month of Sundays: October

October 4th – Leslie Mills, minister –
“Autumn Leaves and Prophets: When Holding On Hurts More Than Letting Go”

October 11th – Susan Anderson and Elizabeth Closson – “Healing the Bruises: Individualism in Beloved Community”

October 18th – Leslie Mills, minister –
“Here I Stand: Being a Sovereign Being” (Youth Pew reserved)

October 25th – Leslie Mills, minister –
“Wanting Memories: Allowing Space for Grief”



Lifespan Religious Exploration and Education



Things in Lifespan Religious Exploration and Education are in full swing. There is so much going on, it's hard for one to choose what to participate in!

Potions 101, Wand-Making Basics, and enjoy special treats like chocolate frogs and pretzels. And then there's Quidditch, of course!

Also this month, we will be kicking off our first social action program, Cardboard City, which focuses on the issues facing the homeless. This will involve parents and families as well, and will include raising money for our local PADS program. The culminating event on November 7 is sleeping outside in decorated cardboard boxes, or for the meeker ones, in their vehicles. So save any large boxes for this exciting event, and mark your calendars for a special evening!

The high school youth will be participating in Youth Pew Sunday on October 18, where they will remain in the worship service and hear wise words from Leslie with their thoughts on the topic woven into the service.

We will end the month with a Chalice Circle, where we will focus on our Seventh Principle and collect prairie seeds from the church property. And then on October 30, we will have a Halloween party for all ages.

Adult Spirituality is underway with two programs being offered, and a third one starting later this month. First, the *Exploring Meditation Practices* program meets at 9:30 a.m. in room 301. Facilitated by Leslie Yoshitani, this class samples a variety of practices from many of the world's religions. This program continues through October 11.

Secondly, a new program, *White Privilege*, will begin October 18. This is based on the book by the same name and will be facilitated by Mitch Jacobs. With our greater UU involvement in the Black Lives Matter movement, this is a timely subject. Look for more details in upcoming announcements.

Improvisation for the Spirit also continues, but is a closed group at this point.

For our younger members, we start October off with a favorite event: Hogwarts Sunday. Everyone is encouraged to dress for Hogwarts UU, and be prepared to take classes such as

In Faith,
 —Kathy Underwood
 Director of Religious
 Exploration and Education

	Preschool	K-2	3-5	6-8	High School
October 4	Hogwarts Sunday				
October 11	Cardboard City				
October 18	Welcome	Games and Creating Covenant	Games and Creating Covenant	Intro to the Bible and Creating Covenant	Youth Pew
October 26	Chalice Circle				Creating Covenant

President's Reflections



As the fall equinox officially begins tomorrow on September 23, and summer ends, we are well into our 2015–2016 church year. After an unexpectedly eventful start of her ministership at UUCE,

Leslie is getting some well deserved quiet time. But let's be honest, church life doesn't stay quiet for long at UUCE and, in my opinion, it shouldn't. When things are quiet for an extended period, it's time to be concerned. I am certain UUCE is not at that juncture. In fact, we have so many new ideas with so much new energy that we have to be careful and recognize that we're not limitless in terms of resources. If you have a proposal for a new church activity and the church leadership seems to react tepidly, it's probably due to the fact that the leadership's plate is already very full and adding another issue to discuss and vote on is not what they are looking for. So we ask for your patience and understanding. That being said, we do not want to discourage anyone from talking to any

member of the church leadership or anybody else in the congregation.

One solution to the problem of not having enough resources to follow through on all of the great ideas is to ask for volunteers. But let me correct that statement, the church shouldn't have to ASK the congregation for volunteers. Volunteers should step up without being asked. I expect more volunteers will be needed this year than in the past because with UUCE's 150th anniversary coming up in 2016 and with Leslie's ordination as well as many new initiatives, more programs and events will be planned. So, every member of UUCE should volunteer to carry out at least one task or responsibility in the 2015–2016 church year. Let's all share the load and grow spiritually together.

In peace,
—Jun Yoshitani
President,
UUCE Board of Trustees

October Adult Spirituality

October 4

Exploring Meditation Practices
Improvisation for the Spirit

October 11

Exploring Meditation Practices
Improvisation for the Spirit

October 18

White Privilege
Improvisation for the Spirit

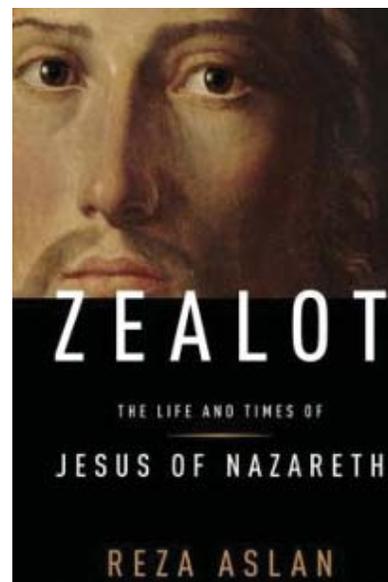
October 26

White Privilege
Improvisation for the Spirit

The Unichord

Afternoon Book Group

The Afternoon Book Group will meet at 12:30 p.m. on Monday, October 26, at the home of Andrea Budasi to discuss "Zealot: The Life and Times of Jesus of Nazareth" by Reza Aslan.



October 2015

UUCE Board of Trustees' Minutes

August 19, 2015

Present: Jun Yoshitani, Stephen Day, Mary Knapp, DJ Jensen, Sandy James, Leslie Mills, Dan Kalkbrenner, Elizabeth Olson, Mike Moutrie

Absent: Steve Stultz, Kevin Webster

I. Welcoming of New Minister, Leslie Mills

II. Opening

- a. Centering
- b. Approval of Agenda
- c. One-minute check-ins
- d. Brief overview of Robert's Rules of Order—discussion
- e. Minutes from July 15, 2015 meeting were approved as read.

III. Reports

- a. Final Budget for 2014–2015* sent by Jamie
- b. Finance Report Treas. Sandy James is developing a new format for financial reports. All financial records and transactions should be easily read and understood by all lay leaders and members.
 - i. Line items will be included to distinguish deductions made on behalf of paid personnel from net salary.
 - ii. Board authorized SJ to research a “patronage fund” model to account for funds donated for a specific purpose and not otherwise reflected in the Annual Budget.
 - iii. Current business credit card will be closed and replaced with a card with a \$5,000 limit.
 - iv. All single-item expenditures of \$500 or more will require Board pre-authorization.
 - v. Endowment Account currently has \$55,620 balance (down 2.66% for the year).
- c. Final Interim Ministry review* (Compiled by Elizabeth Olson)
 - i. Five board members, two Transition Team members, and one Executive Team member contributed to the evaluation. Additional

resources: Congregational Survey, Interim Minister Contract, and Transition Team documents. Final version will be sent to the UUA and to Lise Adams Sherry. Document will be archived on BOT Google Drive.

d. Executive Team Report—Leslie Mills

- i. Serious IT concerns prompted Jun Yoshitani to invite Mike Moutrie to attend this meeting in order to discuss formation of task force to address technology issues. The Church Administrator has some serious concerns. Todd Underwood managed to get the Church Calendar working for Sheena, but the website is not working. Also purchased a new computer for Minister's office to replace one barely functioning.

- ii. After discussion, Mike agreed to assemble a small group of identified church members with skills in IT in order to evaluate all ET technology concerns and assess what needs can be addressed by church volunteers and/or out-sourced to professionals, and he brought a written invitation to these volunteers composed by himself and Stephen Day.

- iii. Absence of comprehensive maintenance oversight must be addressed. All-church cleanup scheduled for Saturday, August 22. A huge mice infestation that is impacting telephone lines. ET researching solution.

- iv. Decision to add an additional \$25 fee for renters using the sound equipment in sanctuary. Meant to cover incidental expenses like light bulbs, batteries, etc. Increasing charge for services of sound board staff also being considered.

- v. Welcoming and Membership Committees need expansion and revitalization.

- vi. Sunday, September 13 is the Ingathering and Water Communion Service and Leslie Mills' first sermon. Andrea Schmidlin is organizing a potluck following the service.

IV. Unfinished Business

- a. Stephen Day continues to archive all important BoT documents online. Going forward, all important documents will be

available for reference, with a clear procedure for updating documentation according to Board action and Congregational vote.

V. New Business

a. Conflict management task force—on hold until next meeting

b. A member has offered a gift to fund publicity for our new minister and the church’s sesquicentennial celebration in 2016.

c. Scheduling the Annual BoT Retreat in

September/October followed by a Workshop with Board and Minister lead by Mid America Region staff later this Fall.

Voted twice to extend meeting time. Meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Submitted by,
Elizabeth Olson

Pledge Income

Received: \$25,067

Budgeted: \$24,100

Calendar Highlights

Worship Services

Sundays at 10:30 a.m.

Labyrinth Event Planning

October 4 at 12:15 p.m.

Afternoon Book Group

October 26 at 12:30 p.m. — offsite

Halloween Party

October 30 from 6–9 p.m.

Cardboard City

November 7

Fall Harvest Market

November 8 after service in Fellowship Hall

Happy Birthday!

- 1 Richard (D.J.) Jensen
- 3 Nikolas Spayne
- 6 David Zobott
- 8 Charlie Schmidlin
- 12 Laurie Kiesewetter
- 16 Chris Davis
- 17 Shirley Wolin
- 18 Amy Schmidlin
- 19 Betsy Thrasher
- 20 Anne Clough

If we missed your birthday this month, we apologize. **Please let us know** and we will add it to the list.

Ways to Get in Touch

WEBSITE

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E-MAIL

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847-888-0668

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P. O. Box 1032

Elgin, IL 60121

PHYSICAL LOCATION

39W830 Highland Avenue

*three miles west of
Randall Rd.*

Come have a spooktacular time!

Halloween Party

October 30 6–9 p.m.



The Unitarian Universalist

Church of Elgin

P. O. Box 1032 • Elgin, IL 60121

