



NOVEMBER 2015

Unichord



THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF ELGIN

Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) Celebration – Sunday, November 1

This Sunday's worship service is a festive, joyful, all-ages celebration of those ancestors who have died (especially those in the past year). Bring photographs of your loved ones whose memories sustain and nourish you – you will have a chance to “bring them back to life” for today through song and story. You can also bring an offering (an *offrenda*) that would make their spirit happy – a favorite

food, or some flowers, or a memento to set beside their photograph on our colorful community altar at the front of the sanctuary. If you want to bring enough food to share, it can be served during coffee hour. This celebration will be set in the context of the Mexican holiday, *Dia de los Muertos* – so adults and children alike should be ready to learn and have fun!

SHIFTING RESPONSIBILITIES

Order of Service and Unichord Changes

Want to make sure your announcement gets to the right place? Read on!

Beginning immediately, all items related to the Order of Service should be sent to oos@uuce.org and, all items related to the *Unichord* newsletter should be sent to unichord@uuce.org. As our Communications Team shifts responsibilities among one another, Donna Askins will be assuming responsibility for the Order of Service in order to free up church

administrator Sheena John for more administrative church duties. As Donna shifts her attention, Taylor Kremer will be taking on responsibility for our evolving *Unichord*. Our team determined that a monthly newsletter is not an efficient way to get current news out to members and visitors, so December will be our final monthly issue. Beginning in January 2016, the *Unichord* will transition to a beautiful weekly format sent straight to your email!

Beloved Community Conversations

Beginning November 1, on “First Sundays” each month you are invited to stay after the service for a 30-minute open house conversation in the sanctuary about what's going on at UUCE. How are we doing at building Beloved Community?

Our minister will be present with other congregational leaders to talk about the exciting things that are going on from month to month – what we've been up to, decisions that have been made, and energizing changes that are coming down the line.

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Minister's Meditation



As we move towards the closing of the year, our November theme of “ancestry” reminds me of the two-faced Roman god Janus, with one face looking forward, the other backward.

This was a deity who straddled the year, with one foot in the past and the other in the promise of a fresh start. It was important to recognize the potential that rested within the transitional time – shaped by what was, with intentions cast toward what-will-be.

When we think of ourselves as people with ancestors, we need to adopt a similar attitude – looking both forward and backward.

Rev. Kathleen McTigue reminds us, “Those who lived before us, who struggled for justice and suffered injustice before us, have not melted into the dust, and have not disappeared. They are with us still. The lives they lived hold us steady. Their words remind us and call us back to ourselves. Their courage and love evoke our own. We, the living, carry them with us.”

When we look at ancestry in this light, we see that “ancestors” are not the same thing as “relatives.” Sara Smalley writes, “Relatives give us our brown eyes and bowed legs; ancestors bless and burden us with a legacy. Relatives are those we tell stories about; ancestors call us to carry the story forward. Our relatives allowed us to be here; our ancestors tell us why we are here and why being here right now matters. The difference is huge. It is all about choosing to see yourself differently and live by a different set of values.”

Who are your ancestors, in this understanding? Whose words call you back to yourself – the “self” that’s truly you, the one you aspire to be? Whose love and courage evokes your own? And what kind of ancestor do you aspire to be one day, when your story is written?

This month, we will explore our ancestry in various ways – through celebrating our loved ones who have died; with music that ties us to cultures and stories beyond our own experience; by questioning our Unitarian Universalist heritage to learn what our spiritual ancestors believed; and by coming together with our annual bread communion, recognizing that we are one link in a long, interdependent chain.

Even though we only have this single month to explore the theme of ancestry, we will be spending a great deal more time in Janus-mode in 2016, looking both backward and forward as UUCE celebrates its 150th anniversary – the sesquicentennial celebration of the congregation’s founding in 1866. If you have ideas, or are interested in helping plan, let me know!

So as we enter into this month of contemplating ancestry, how might we challenge ourselves to grow?

“You will hear ancestor-conscious people speak of blessings differently,” Sara Smalley writes. “People of ancestry look at their blessings and choose to see not only a gift, but also a responsibility. It’s one thing to gratefully celebrate the blessings passed on to us; it’s quite another to be so grateful for those blessings that we can’t help but ensure they get passed on to others. Simply put, ancestors pass on obligations. To be a people of ancestry means recognizing that something of value has been entrusted to you and that there is a long line of people behind you counting on you to pass it on.”

What blessings might we be mindful of, that we are morally bound to pass on to those who come after us? The list is long and plentiful. Let us count these blessings, that we may help them multiply.

With love,

Leslie

Leslie Mills
Minister

A Month of Sundays: November

November Theme – Ancestry

November 1 – Dia de los Muertos: Celebrating Our Dear Dead Dears (Leslie Mills, minister)

For this intergenerational celebration, you are invited to bring pictures of loved ones who have died (and samples of things they loved) to decorate our communal offrenda – the altar where we put our offerings to bring them back to life through memory. But this isn't a somber day – wear bright colors and get ready to sing songs lifting up the gift of life!

November 8 – Music Sunday

Musicians of all ages will be celebrating our musical heritage this Sunday. Some songs will be performances for us to appreciate, and others will invite us to sing along. We will also be hosting the Farmer's Market following the service.

November 15 – Big Tent Theology: The Limits on Believing Whatever You Want (Leslie Mills, minister)

Some would say that ours is a religion where you can "believe whatever you want," but that's not necessarily true. What are the boundaries of our living tradition, and how can we assure ourselves that we belong?

November 22 – Five Kernels of Corn: A Thanksgiving Service (Guest minister, Reverend Denise Tracy)

The Pilgrims showed us how to deal with the bittersweetness of life. There are lessons to learn from our heritage about how to live with times that are a challenge.

Rev. Denise Tracy is a retired Unitarian Universalist Minister, although "retired" is not a word that describes her life. She is a Police Chaplain with the EPD, President of the Liberal Clergy Group CERL, a tutor at a middle school, and on the Operations of the Alignment Collaborative for Education. She and her husband, Bill Decker, have three children and three grandchildren. They reside in Elgin.

November 27 – The Harvest of Our Lives: Braided Bread (Leslie Mills, minister)

Come together for this annual favorite – the bread communion – where we recognize the interdependence of our shared community with handmade bread and reflections on the many people who made it possible to share this ritual meal together.

Beloved Community Conversations

Continued from page 1

It will also be an opportunity for you to ask questions about things you've noticed. We want you to have clarity about why things are happening, and we're open to hearing your feedback and thoughtful suggestions.

November's Beloved Community Conversation will focus around membership

and communication. This is your chance to hear from our newly-appointed Membership Coordinator, Kathy Hislip, as well as the people organizing our church hospitality. There are some changes in the works for our electronic communications, too, which our minister is excited to tell you about. We look forward to sharing our news with you!

Lifespan Religious Exploration and Education



CARDBOARD CITY IS HERE NOVEMBER 7!

Come to Fellowship Hall at 6:00 for the UUCE Soup Kitchen Potluck and experience what it might be like to be homeless by

sleeping in a cardboard box. This all ages program will begin with a soup kitchen followed by a short program. Then everyone will make their shelters out of cardboard boxes to sleep in (families may choose to sleep in their cars). We'll have a campfire to keep warm until bedtime and enjoy a hot pancake breakfast in the morning. We'll also count the money we collected in the past few weeks to donate to our local PADS program.

LIFESPAN RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION AND EDUCATION (REE)

As the weather gets cooler and the daylight hours shorter, I have mixed emotions. I love the fall season with the colors of the changing landscape, less humidity and heat. As I miss the longer hours of sunlight, I find that I appreciate the ones we have even more.

It is also a little more challenging to want to go out in the evenings. There is a tug-of-war inside between wanting to stay in the warmth and quiet of home, and venturing out to do things and meet others. If this is a struggle for you, I encourage you to try some give-and-take: allow yourself some of the indulgence of staying inside, but once a week or so, plan something to do in the community that you'd look forward to. Some things that might entice you to get out are happening at UUCE! Adult Spirituality continues with White Privilege at 9:30 Sunday mornings in room 302. The topics covered will be Power and Privilege on November 1 and Power of Resistance on November 8.

We will begin a new program, Creativity, on November 15. More details will be sent

out in the announcements, so look for those. Improvisation for the Spirit also continues, but is a closed group at this point.

Our family program, Miracles, continues on November 18. Those who wish to bring their dinner and eat together will gather at 6pm in Fellowship Hall. The program will begin at 6:45 and end at 7:45.

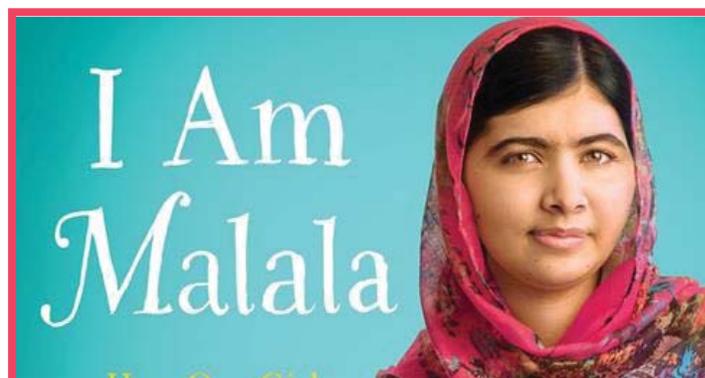
The high school youth will be participating in Youth Pew Sunday, date to be determined. Afterwards, they will have lunch with Leslie to share their thoughts on how it went and on a new topic for next month.

We will end the month with a Chalice Circle, where we will focus on the meaning of the winter holiday season as it pertains to our Christian roots.

In Faith,

Kathy

—Kathy Underwood
Director of Religious
Exploration and Education



The Afternoon Book Group will meet at 12:30 on Monday, November 30, at the home of Dotty Carringi to discuss "[I Am Malala](#)" by Malala Yousafzai. For more information contact [Alice Macy](#).

President's Reflections



Article VII of By-Laws of UUCE states what the Board of Trustees can and can't do on behalf of the church, but doesn't define how the Board should function except in general terms, such as:

the president shall preside at all meetings, and the secretary shall keep accurate record of all Board meetings. Given this broad latitude, the Board for any given church year can decide how it will function. This flexibility is good in many respects, but it can also lead to some areas of dysfunction such as micromanaging church problems while lacking proportionate focus on big issues. To get us back on track, the Board for the church year 2015-2016 recently held an all-day "retreat" in which members along with Minister Leslie Mills participated in team building and focusing on the Board's responsibility to address church governance policies. The retreat was well planned, organized, and ably facilitated by Lydia Larrabee and Elizabeth Closson. We learned a lot, had fun, and ate good food. What more can you ask for? Kudos to both Lydia and Elizabeth. Although it may not be readily apparent to the congregation, we will be aiming to put into practice what we learned at the retreat.

If you are new to UUCE, members of the Board of Trustees are Jun Yoshitani, president, Steve Stultz, president-elect, Sandy James, treasurer, Kevin Webster, secretary, and members at large: Stephen Day, Mary Knapp, Elizabeth Olson, DJ Jensen, and Dan Kalkbrenner.

Incidentally, in preparation for the retreat, Leslie Mills asked all Board members to read a book by Dan Hotchkiss titled "Governance and Ministry." The book is primarily about Board leadership, but it also provides a good understanding of the relationships that exist between the Minister, the Board and the Congregation. The success of a church depends on all three parts working together. I highly recommend it to anyone interested in learning about how well-functioning churches are structured and organized.

In peace,

Jun

—Jun Yoshitani

President,

UUCE Board of Trustees

Adult Spirituality

White Privilege—November 1 and 8 at 9:30

Improvisation for the Spirit—Sundays at 9:00

Creativity—November 15 and 22

	Preschool	K-2	3-5	6-8	High School
Nov. 1	All ages remain in the service				
Nov. 8	All ages remain in the service				
Nov. 15	Tour of Our Church	About the Bible	Books of the Bible	Intro to the Bible	Planning Session
Nov. 18	Family program at 6:00: <i>Miracles</i>				
Nov. 22	Tour of Our Church	About the Bible	Creation	In the Beginning	TBD
Nov. 29	Chalice Circle				TBD

UUCE Board of Trustees' Minutes

Minutes of September 16, 2015

Present: Dan Kalkbrenner, Elizabeth Olson, Jun Yoshitani, Kathy Underwood, Kevin Webster, Leslie Mills, Mark Knapp, Sandy James, Stephen Day, Steve Stultz.

Opening

7:06 Centering — “What does it mean to be a Board Member”

7:20 Discussion about upcoming Board Retreat and Board Workshop with UUA Rep

➤ Leslie to find available dates for UUA Rep

➤ Stephen to “Doodle,” or assist Board members choose from the available dates provided by Leslie

7:28 Motion by Mary to approve agenda passed

7:29 Motion by Sandy to approve minutes of previous meeting passed

Reports

7:31 Finance Report by Sandy

➤ Motion by Sandy to proceed with set-up of a patronage fund...

Amended by Elizabeth to proceed with set-up of a patron fund...

Motion by Sandy to postpone the question until the next board meeting was passed

7:52 Executive Team Report by Leslie

7:54 DRE Report by Kathy
Discussion about need for staffing for Child Care

➤ Motion by Sandy to hire Taylor Kremer to fill the Child Care worker vacancy and hire a new assistant passed

➤ Mary to assist Kathy in hiring an assistant

➤ Motion by Elizabeth for the Board to appoint a two person Personnel committee to review the Personnel handbook and policies and ensure the church is in compliance failed

➤ Motion by Stephen for the Board to appoint a two person committee to serve as an HR department to handle the search, interviewing and employing and ensure all personnel policies are in compliance with federal and state laws was withdrawn

➤ Motion by Stephen for the Board to appoint a two person committee to assist Kathy with hiring two replacement child care workers passed

Unfinished business

8:31 Discussion about continuation and accessibility of church documents online by Stephen

8:40 Discussion about Publicity proposal by Jun and Leslie

New business

9:00 Motion by Sandy to extend the meeting for fifteen minutes passed

9:02 Discussion about an Endowment Fund drive for 2016 by Elizabeth King

Closing

9:22 Motion to adjourn by Stephen passed

Budget Check!

Does your committee have a budget? If so, have you been tracking your spending to make sure you stay under budget? Now that we're a quarter of the way into our fiscal year, this would be a good time to check and make sure you're on track. Not sure what your budget is? Contact the Finance Committee Chair, [Shari Smagatz](#).

What is Climate Justice?

The Green Sanctuary Committee shares these words from **Commit2Respond**, a coalition of Unitarian Universalists and other people of faith and conscience working for climate justice:

JUSTICE means recognizing that the peoples who contribute the least to climate change are the ones suffering the most because of it, and that climate change mitigation is an essential component to reduce the suffering of vulnerable peoples.

JUSTICE means understanding that oppressions are inextricably linked and the values that have resulted in the degradation of human groups through slavery, colonization, genocide, and mass incarceration are the same values that are leading to the destruction of Earth.

JUSTICE means grounding our work in the needs and leadership of marginalized peoples who are impacted by and fighting climate change—Native peoples, island peoples, poor and low-income peoples whose livelihood and lives depend on the land, and others.

Care Team

Do you enjoy showing that you care about people? Are you interested in helping us build Beloved Community by reaching out to members who are experiencing difficult times? If so, the Care Team is happy to welcome open hearts who want to help support our church family. **Leslie Yoshitani** is our lead facilitator, with Chris Davis serving as her assistant. **Contact Leslie** if you are interested in joining the team, or if you are going through a struggle and are in need of a caring presence.

JUSTICE means working for intergenerational equity, honoring the leadership of youth and elders, recognizing that today's children will carry the burdens of climate change forward.

JUSTICE means honoring the interdependent web of all life by recognizing that destruction visited on one part of the web—whether one person, species, or ecosystem—impacts all, and working to combat species extinction and ecosystem destruction.

JUSTICE means working in relationship and partnership, always seeking out community-based solutions that challenge the status quo rather than individual actions that only uphold the power structures and values that are destroying our world.

Raise
your voice for
JUSTICE on Sunday,
November 15th! The Green
Sanctuary will hold a letter-
writing event on climate change in
Fellowship Hall after the service.
Come make a difference!



November Offertory Recipient

With our monthly theme focusing on “Ancestry,” our Executive Team reflected that this month is a perfect opportunity for us to dedicate our resources to our own Endowment Fund, so that we might prove to be good ancestors to those who follow us. Throughout November, please consider giving as generously as you are able to increase our Endowment so that it might sustain UUCE for many more years to come. As usual, pledges are not divided, but half of all cash/check donations in the Sunday offertory will go to the Endowment Fund, and the other half to our operating budget. If you would prefer your entire check to go to one or the other, you can indicate your preference in the memo line. Thank you for all you do to help grow our church!



Leadership Start-Up Retreat

All church leaders, past and present, are invited to participate in our Start-Up Retreat on Saturday, November 7, 8:30-3:00, at UUCE. The day will be led by Rev. Ian Evison, a congregational life consultant from our UUA MidAmerica Regional staff. During this workshop, we will explore questions of our church’s history and culture – How do things get done around here? Who does them, and why? What are the spoken and unspoken assumptions we have about our congregation’s leadership? The purpose of this retreat is to help all church leaders – including our new minister – get off to a good start together, which includes sharing a common understanding of the way things work. It is especially important for leaders serving on the Board, Committee on Ministry, and Executive Team to be present, along with former Board members, current committee chairs, and anyone else who feels they have a piece of the puzzle to share. No RSVP is necessary, but please bring your own brown bag lunch. Light breakfast items will be provided.

Calendar Highlights

Worship Services
Sundays at 10:30

Afternoon Book Group
November 30 at 12:30—offsite

Candlelight Labyrinth Walk —
Remembering Ancestors & Beloved Departed
— Labyrinth, Fellowship Hall & Kitchen

Cardboard City
November 7

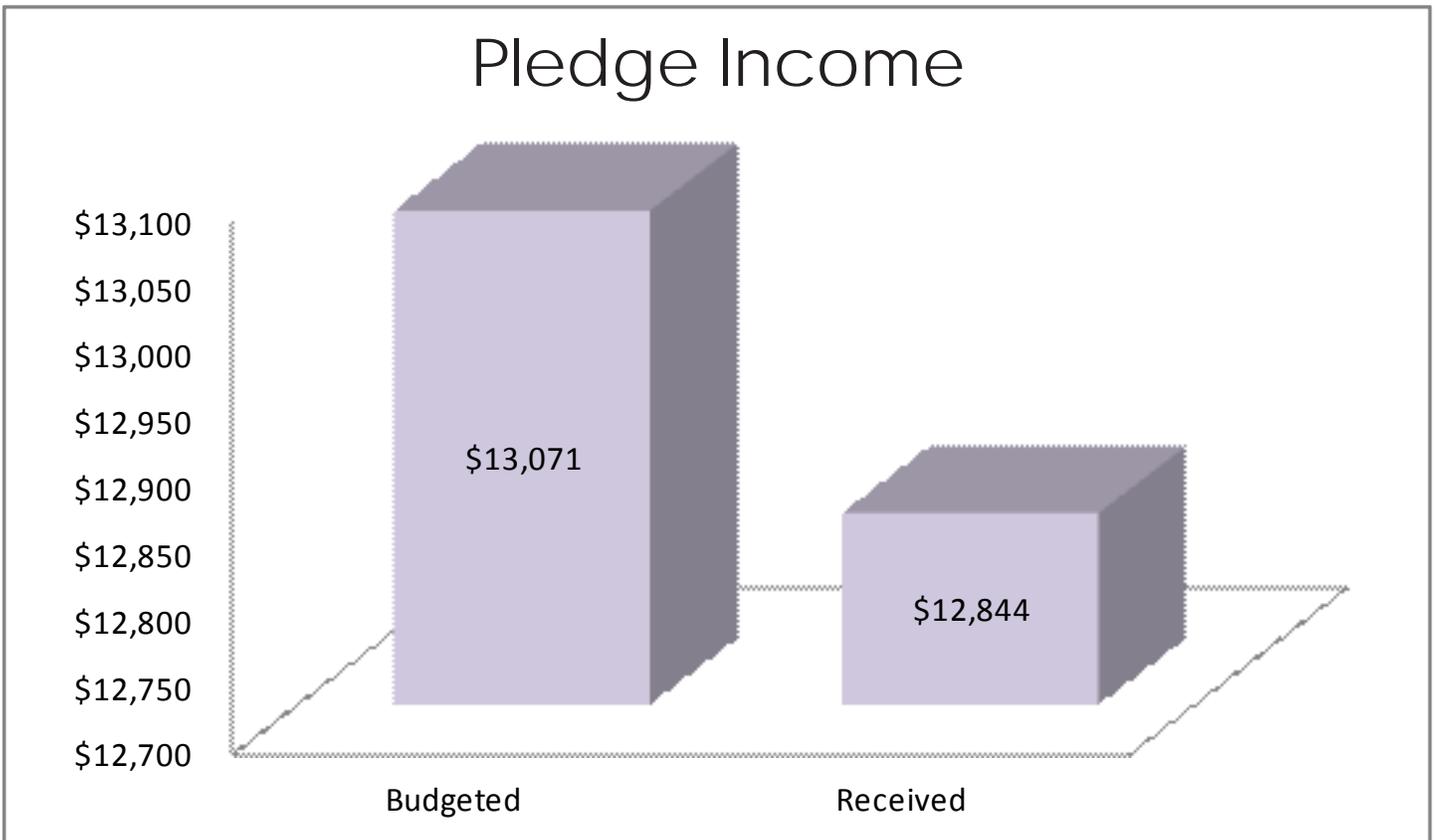
Fall Harvest Market
November 8 in Fellowship Hall
— after the service

Green Sanctuary Committee
November 22 in room 301

Leadership Startup Retreat
November 7 from 8:30-3:00

Happy Birthday!

- 2 Henny DuBois
- 6 Mary Alice Masonick
- 7 Kay Kummerow
- 7 Miles Anderson
- 11 Phil Webster
- 11 Janette Spink
- 13 Betsi Waldron
- 15 Andrea Schmidlin
- 15 Duncan Yucuis
- 16 Camilla Rose Hussein
- 16 Zachary Burger
- 20 Bonnie Schwank
- 24 Jeff Burger
- 25 Michelle Sweeney
- 25 Cheryl Janu
- 26 Norm Wilkinson
- 26 Helen King
- 27 Elizabeth Olson
- 27 Mara Jade Clough
- 28 Krista Flanagan



Our Church Needs Your Assistance!

Thanks to a restructuring of communications tasks, our office administrator, Sheena John, will soon be ready to begin receiving volunteers to help with office work and simple building maintenance – and so we are organizing a UUCE Volunteer Corps, with three levels of participation:

ON-CALL VOLUNTEER:

Is available sporadically to be called in for specific, one-time-only tasks as needed

WEEKLY VOLUNTEER:

Is available at a regular time each week, willing to do time-limited tasks

LONG-TERM VOLUNTEER:

Assigned to one large task, will come in on own time to work on it over weeks

Sheena will serve as the volunteer supervisor, preparing tasks in advance when she knows someone is scheduled to come in and help. In the office, these tasks might include: making copies, cutting paper, updating the filing system, entering data, or updating forms and informational sheets. In the building, these tasks might include: changing lightbulbs, spot-cleaning, emptying the dishwasher, minor repairs, or seasonal tasks. These things may seem small, but when they go undone, the church doesn't run as smoothly. With a little help from you, we'll get the church chugging along in no time! Contact Sheena to let her know your interest and availability at administrator@uuce.org.

Interested in Becoming a Member?

We're delighted to announce that Kathy Hislip has agreed to serve as Membership Coordinator, with skillful assistance from Lydia Larrabee! This dynamic duo is in the process of getting their plans in place – not only for welcoming potential new members, but also for tending to the current members

and helping create Beloved Community here at UUCE. Interested in helping? Let them know! Want to become a member? Let them know that, too! Contact Kathy at wiljim7488@aol.com.



Communications Team Turns Dial to 11

Have you been wishing there was an easy way for you to forward church news to your friends so they could subscribe themselves? Would it be nice to call the church and be able to leave a message directly with the person you're trying to reach? Are you longing to hear more frequently from your leaders about the life of our church? Do you wish there was a visually-pleasing way to stay current with upcoming events using your smartphone or tablet? Does our website leave you wanting more?

Well, we're excited to announce that our Communications Team is on the job! Stay tuned for upcoming announcements about beautiful weekend email updates, upgrades in the church phone system, a potential new layout for our website, and more. Final details will appear in the December newsletter. Want to hear the news sooner? Come to our first monthly Beloved Community Conversation following the service on November 1st!

A Special Invitation from Faith in Place

As the year comes to a close, it's time to celebrate our accomplishments as people of faith, caring for the Earth!

This year we hope you will be able to join us for a **Celebration and Fundraiser Event** near you in the Western suburbs.

On Wednesday, November 18, from 7:00-8:00 p.m., we will gather in Glen Ellyn at St. Mark's Episcopal Church to share refreshments, meet new friends, celebrate our collective achievements, and be motivated by our goals for the future.

While **registration** for this dessert and cheese buffet event is free, all in attendance will be asked to give generously in celebration of the impactful vision, mission, and programs of Faith in Place.

Our special guest speaker, Bishop Jeffrey Lee of the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago, will speak about the moral obligation that all faiths hold in common to care for the air, waters, lands, and life on our Earth.

From houses of worship planting vegetable gardens, to over 2000 people of faith signing petitions in support of clean energy, to faith communities starting Green Teams, and everything in between, we have a lot to celebrate this year.

I hope you will be able to join me for this inspiring event.

Sincerely,

Rev. Brian Sauder, Executive Director



This Celebration and Fundraiser includes a dessert and cheese buffet. Yum!

Ways to Get in Touch

WEBSITE

www.uuce.org

E-MAIL

minister@uuce.org

administrator@uuce.org

unichord@uuce.org

PHONE

847-888-0668

POSTAL MAIL

P. O. Box 1032

Elgin, IL 60121

PHYSICAL LOCATION

39W830 Highland Avenue

*three miles west of
Randall Rd.*

Music Sunday and Fall Harvest Market – November 8th

Come enjoy a relaxing morning of music, performed by your friends here at UUCE. We have a large lineup this year, so this all-ages service may run a little longer than usual. The entire offering for this special Sunday

will go to UUCE's Music Fund, which is how

we pay for sheet music, piano tuning, handbell refurbishing,

and extra musicians in

worship. Following

the service, head

downstairs to shop at

our annual Fall Harvest

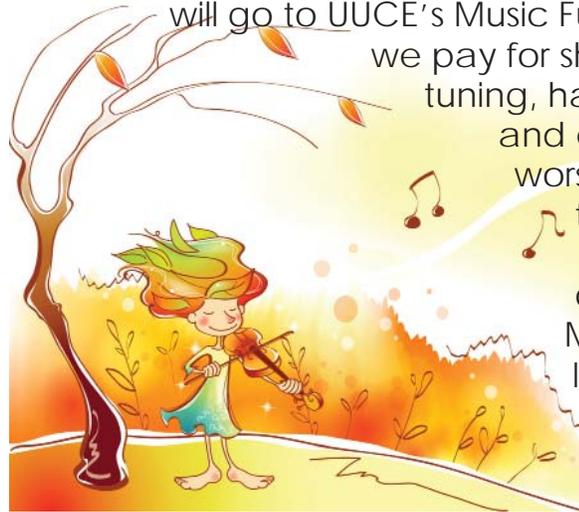
Market, with lots of

local vendors selling

farm-fresh food and

handmade gifts from

noon-3:00.



The Unitarian Universalist

Church of Elgin

P. O. Box 1032 • Elgin, IL 60121

