

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Elgin

UNICHORD



February, 2010

MAGICAL MYSTERY TOUR 2010

Roll up, roll up for the mystery tour. Roll up and that's an invitation, roll up to make a reservation, roll up for the mystery tour.

Time to get up off your cornflakes and make your way to the annual service auction Saturday Feb. 27th at UUCE. It is the one event of the year where all members can come together for some great food, fellowship, fun and fundraising. If you are new to the service auction, this is the only fundraiser that the church has each year. The event provides numerous ways to support the work of the church: You can donate items to the Silent Auction that will open with items displayed in the entry area a couple of weeks before the auction. You can donate services to the live auction by entering them online or sending an email to BobS@NewUU.com or filling out a form in Fellowship Hall. You can find ideas of services from last year's auction program on the web site www.uuceHoliday.com.

Get all of that money you keep in the big brown bag inside the zoo because this year you

can BUY IT NOW!! This is a whole new concept for those who can't wait to bid.

You can walk right by the barber showing photographs and the banker with a motorcar, even the fireman with an hourglass ... but do not pass up the Penny Lane Pub where Dan and Kathy Hislip will be serving adult beverages and great fun. No one will be falling asleep at Cheren Waller's Blue Jay Cafe. She and her crew are planning a delightfully tasty stop-over for our tour bus. Get lucky in the Baby You're a Rich Man Raffle and be ready for some surprises as the Magical Mystery Tour Bus will be taking us all away to another time and place where there's nothing you can do that can't be done ... nothing you can do but you can learn to be you ... in time.

Questions? See [Anne Ward](#) or [Bob Sandidge](#), Co-Tour Directors MMT 2010

*The Magical Mystery Tour is coming to take you away,
Coming to take you away. Get your tickets now!*



FROM THE MINISTER



I went into the ministry because I had an interest in the issues associated with religion, spirituality, and community. Over the years I have had a passion for a variety of these issues—like Buddhism, the Tao te Ching, the notion of a dying and resurrected god, and the origins of current religious

practices. As of late, though, my interest has been on death and taxes.

Actually, I've always been intrigued by death and how it is deeply rooted in our lives. Having death be a prominent issue in life is not unusual for a person interested in religion and spirituality. I hope to do more on this topic in the future.

The newer interest is the taxes issue. It is not really so much about taxes, as it is about our relationship with money. More and more I see that

how we relate to money is a spiritual issue—a major spiritual issue. Many of us don't even connect spirituality with money, but it might be one of the greatest challenges we face on our spiritual path. It certainly is an indicator of how we are doing on our spiritual journey. I believe it could be a litmus test for how much we live by fear, and how much we live by love.

The New Testament saying that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God speaks to this issue. The issue is not so much that you have money, but what you prioritize to get that money and keep that money. Too often we worship the dollar instead of the moral values we hold dear. Our relationship with money tells us a great deal about our inner life.

Almost universally, religions espouse the goal to live generously. The goal is to prioritize our values

GIFTS WE GAVE

We collected a total of \$343.50 for the Larkin Home in December. Usually, a good portion of the money we collect for the Home in December goes toward buying gifts for tags left on the tree. This year, however, every single tag on the tree was taken! So thanks to all of you, we had an extra-generous gift for the Larkin Home.

In addition, on Christmas Eve, a special collection was taken for the Boys and Girls Club of Elgin. We collected \$323 for the club.

over affluence and materialism. It is not a matter of how rich or poor you are – what matters is how you relate to your money. Regardless of income, we are all called to be generous. Those who are generous, those who live generously, experience life with more satisfaction and meaning than those who guard jealously their wealth. This is not a call to give all your financial resources away. This is a call to be more generous—to give until it feels right. Not a decision based on fear, but one that arises out of love and compassion.

--Dan

A MONTH OF SUNDAYS

7 "ISMS"

A look at prejudice and how we can begin to dismantle it in our lives. Service led by the Rev. Dan Brosier.

14 THE SIGNAL

A short story by Allan Wheelis about fortune cookies and the meaning of life. Service led by the Rev. Dan Brosier.

21 VIEW FROM AN ATHEIST

As UUs, we're obliged to participate in our own personal search for truth and meaning. So what does that look like if you are (like me) an Atheist? Each person's quest is unique; I can only speak authoritatively about mine. I have found beauty, wonder, and understanding in my quest for meaning -- without requiring any spirits, deities or higher powers. I'd like to share some of my discoveries, and how they have informed my life. Service led by Susan Anderson. Speaker: Doug Pratt.

28 MY JOURNEY TO THIS CHURCH AND WHAT IT MEANS TO ME

A personal reflection on how I came to Unitarian Universalism and why it holds a central place in my life. Service led by the Rev. Dan Brosier.

All services begin at 10:45

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

WORSHIP SERVICES

Sundays at 10:45

ADULT R.E. CLASSES

Sundays at 9:00 in rooms 301 and 302

BOARD MEETING

February 17 at 7:00
in the Fellowship Hall

BOOK GROUP

February 22, at 12:30 (off-site)

BUDDHIST GROUP

Thursdays at 6:30 in rooms 301 and 302

CARE TEAM MEETING

February 16 at 10:00



CHOIR PRACTICE

Thursday nights
at 7:30
in the Sanctuary



COMMITTEE

ON THE MINISTRY

February 3 at 7:00

COVENANT GROUP

February 9 and 23 at 7:00 (offsite)

EXECUTIVE TEAM

MEETINGS

February 3 and 17

FAMILY FRIDAY

February 19 at 5:30 in the Fellowship Hall

FINANCE COMMITTEE

February 10 at 7:00

GREEN SANCTUARY

February 21 at 12:30 in room 301

PAGAN UNITY: IMBOLC

RITUAL AND POTLUCK

In the Fellowship Hall and Sanctuary on February 6 at 6:00.

Sandy and Andrew Russel will lead us as we gather to honor the Celtic fire feast of the Irish goddess of hearth and home, Brigid. She is the keeper of the flame, the protector of the home, and a goddess of holy wells and springs. At Imbolc we acknowledge her many aspects, especially her role as a deity of fertility, purification and transformation. What are the ashes that you need to symbolically cleanse from your hearth? What fires of creation will you ignite when we symbolically relight the hearth fire?

PARENTING

BOOK CIRCLE

Friday evenings; contact [Diana Jyoti](#) for details

QUUILTERS /

PROJECT LINUS

February 6, 9:30-12, room 302

R.E. COUNCIL

February 24 at 7:00
in the Fellowship Hall

SOCIAL JUSTICE

MEETING

February 24 at 7:00

STRATEGIC PLANNING

MEETING

February 15 at 7:00 in room 301

SERVICE AUCTION

SETUP

February 24, 25, 26

UNICHORD DEADLINE

February 21

WESTERN CRESCENT

MINISTERS' MEETING

February 17 at 11:30 in 301

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

February 7 at 9:15

SERVICE AUCTION: MAGICAL MYSTERY TOUR

February 27

Silent Auction and Appetizers 5:30
Cheren's Magic Bus Stop Diner 7:00

Silent Auction Closes at 7:45

LIVE AUCTION AT 8:00

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



This month we have several programs happening! First, we will be continuing an intersession program on helping others. Young people in preschool through 8th grade will be given a special challenge to do seven good deeds anonymously for others. They will

be given a wallet-sized card to keep track of each good deed. When we next gather, we will share our experiences -- how we chose our good deeds, what the person's reaction was, and what made it fun to do. From there, we will branch out to ways to help others in the larger community and end by picking a social action project to work on.

Next, we will have our Mystery Match program during the first two weeks of the month. This program encourages adults and young people to get to know each other a bit more. The Mystery Matches will be revealed on February 14th after the service.

Then on the 19th, we will have Family Friday. We

will start at 5:30pm with a potluck dinner, followed by some Valentine activities and games.

The 6th-8th grade class will be wrapping up their field testing of a new curriculum, "Riddle and Mystery." They have been videotaping a newscast throughout the year on Life's Big Questions. We hope to have an edited DVD soon to show the congregation.

Looking ahead, most classes will begin a unit on our Jewish and Christian heritage this month. Look for special exhibits showcasing what they are learning in the months to come!

In Adult Spirituality, our two programs will continue through March: "The Transcendentalist Movement" and "Life Is A Verb: 37 Days to Wake Up, Be Mindful, and Live Intentionally." Both programs start at 9am on Sunday mornings and end at 10:30am. All are invited to join in at any time.

In Faith,
Kathy

TENDING OUR GROUNDS

All those interested in planning and/or caring for our church grounds are invited to the semi-annual meeting of the Landscape and Grounds Team on February 28 at 12:30pm in Room 301. We will develop our goals and action plans for the growing season -- which will soon be here! See **Kathy Underwood** for more details.

FAMILY FRIDAY FUN!

All ages are invited to an evening of fun on February 19 at 5:30pm. We will start with a potluck supper, followed by games and activities.

PARENTING BOOK CIRCLE: NEW MEETING TIME!

The Parenting Book Circle has decided to meet monthly on Friday evenings rather than to continue on Sunday mornings. The next book the Circle is reading: "Animal, Vegetable, Miracle" by Barbara Kingsolver.

The group will probably meet on the third or fourth Friday of each month; do contact **Diana Jyoti** for details.

	Preschool	K-2nd	3rd-5th	6th-8th	High School
Feb. 7	Social Action Intersession				Our 7 UU Principles
Feb. 14	Social Action Intersession				Our 7 UU Principles
♥ Feb. 14: Mystery Matches Revealed! ♥					
Feb. 21	Wondering About Stars	Shabbat & Sabbath	God Images	The Gospels According to the Simpsons	Remain in the worship service
Feb. 28	Wondering About the Moon	Purim	Making God Books	The Gospels According to the Simpsons	Our 7 UU Principles
	Preschool	K-2nd	3rd-5th	6th-8th	High School

February, 2010

SUMMARY OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES

16 December 2009, 7:00pm

In attendance: Kevin Sweeney, Andrea Budasi, Kevin Webster, Andrea Schmidlin, Beth Cooper-Zobott, Shari Smagatz, Dennis Schwank, and Dan Brosier representing the Executive Team

- The Executive Team was asked to write a description for the Religious Education Council and Committee on the Ministry.
- Strategic Plan Task Force: Andrea Schmidlin reported that two members resigned (Christina Conway and Kathy Hislip). Elizabeth Olson agreed to join the task force.
- Financial Reporting Task Force: Kevin Webster continues to evaluate Quickbooks.
- Dan Brosier recommended the Board be more involved in the canvass process and invited members of the Board to a Canvass Planning Session on Wed. December 30 from 9-12.
- Employee Compensation Task Force: Discussion and recommendations for 2010. More discussion needed, recommendations to be completed by January.
- UUCE Alcohol Policy: Motion to approve the policy was made by Andrea Budasi and was seconded by Dennis Schwank. Accepted unanimously.
- Nominating Committee Policy – Kevin Webster and Dennis Schwank revised the policy. Accepted unanimously as amended. Kevin Webster will consolidate amendments and provide to the Board. Associated by-laws change

- was also approved for presentation at the Annual Meeting in May. Motion presented by Dennis Schwank and seconded by Andrea Schmidlin. Accepted unanimously.
- Social Justice – Taking a stand as a group or a congregation: Dan handed out a recommendation for a policy on this issue. Revisions are necessary and the policy will be presented at the January meeting.
- Security Policy – Beth Cooper-Zobott presented background information to review and discuss at a later date.
- Committee on the Ministry & Religious Education Committee By-law Change Proposal – Presented by Kevin Sweeney. Approved, with amendments, for presentation at the Annual Meeting.
- Financial Coordinator – Discussion about revising or renaming this Executive Team Position. More discussion is needed to reach consensus.
- Board Awareness: Margot Cusimano - Joe requested that her memorial service be 12/27 at the regular church service if necessary. Shari Smagatz reported that she was asked questions as "Talk to a Trustee."
- Designated Trustee and Check Signer schedule for 2010 through June was updated.

*--As summarized by Kevin Sweeney,
President of the Board of Trustees*

PRESIDENT'S REFLECTIONS

Of late, I have had a strong focus on simplifying my life. If you're spread too thin, it's difficult to do anything particularly well. This principle applies to organizations as well. As a Church, it is important to understand what we do well, what we want to do, and what we may not want to do any longer. The Strategic Plan Task Force is busy answering these questions, so that beginning this summer, we'll know where to focus. Do you feel strongly that we need to do more, or less,

of anything in particular? If so, please let me know and I'll pass it along.

Canvass season is soon upon us. The past two years have been rough for many families financially, but it is important to keep in mind that without sufficient support from the congregation, the Church has to make difficult decisions about what to cut out of the budget. The Canvass Committee will be providing information about what is considered a generous level of

giving, and how many dollars the church needs to fund its operations.

I recently attended my first Circle Supper, and really enjoyed the experience. It's a great way to meet new people, or to deepen your connection with those you know. If you haven't signed up, I would encourage you to do so when enrollment is open again.

The Service Auction is almost upon us! I hope I'll see you there for the Magical Mystery Tour.

--Kevin

WHAT IS A GREEN SANCTUARY?

(with excerpts from "Vision and Purpose of the UU Ministry for Earth" www.uumfe.org)

We envision a world in which all people make reverence, gratitude, and care for the living Earth central to their lives. Our purpose is to inspire, facilitate and support personal, congregational and denominational practices that honor and sustain the Earth and all beings. We affirm and promote the seven principles of the UUA, including: "Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part."

UU Ministry for Earth is an affiliate of the UUA. The concept began in 1989 with discussions about how to

make the Seventh Principle of the UUA more central to members, congregations and the Association. The first edition of the Green Sanctuary Handbook was published in 1991, blending religious celebrations, education, administration and community action. In 1999, Rev. Fred Small inspired a national environmental program. By 2002, The Seventh Principle Project incorporated and the Green Sanctuary Program began accrediting congregations.

A Green Sanctuary is a congregation that

- Has received official recognition for completing the Green Sanctuary Program.
- Lives out its commitment to the Earth by creating sustainable

lifestyles for its members as individuals and as a faith community.

- Is committed to creating a religious community that has a fundamental, bottom-line, commitment to living in harmony with the Earth.

UUCE was accredited as a Green Sanctuary in 2003 and will soon undergo a formal recertification, assessing our ongoing commitment and future goals.

Interested? You are welcome to join us on the 3rd Sunday of the month at 12:30 pm. Feel free to email me, too.

--**Mary Alice Masonick**, Chair
Green Sanctuary Committee

A JUICY STORY

This month fruit juice is on top of the All People's Inter-Faith Pantry's list of needs.

In addition to juice, the Pantry needs chili, jelly, bar soap and of course cereal.

Try to bring your donations on our Pantry Sunday, February 7. A thank you for all your past donations!



SHARE THE PLATE

During each Sunday service we pass the baskets to collect an offering. Half the non-pledged cash donations collected are given to a charitable organization. In the month of February this charitable organization is the Community Crisis Center which provides emergency shelter for women and children and works to break the cycle of domestic violence. If you wish to write a check to support the program make it out to the UUCE and write "Share the Plate" on the memo line.

CANVASS PREVIEW

The annual pledge drive will begin with the distribution of envelopes and other pledge materials on Sunday, March 7. The drive will wind up on Sunday, March 14. Those who turn in pledges on March 14 will be eligible for a special drawing.

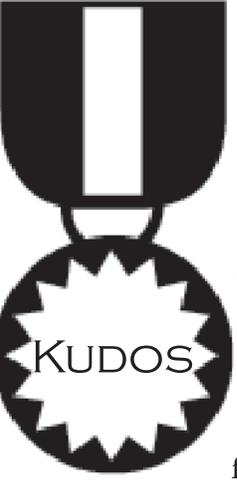
Canvass Committee members read the book *Creating Congregations of Generous People* as preparation for the canvass. The thrust of the book and our plans is on making the pledge drive a spiritual as well as a financial event. Those of you who have given financial support to persons affected by the economic recession and various natural disasters already know the

personal gratification that generosity can bring.

Pledging signifies ownership of financial responsibility for church staff and property. It is also a commitment to the realization of the congregation's mission and vision for the church community. Think of what we could accomplish in the way of spiritual, emotional, and educational opportunities for ourselves and our children if we became a congregation of generous people. Think of the transformative possibilities if we reach out to the larger community and the world so that others might value the principles we value.

--**Roberta Nauman**, Canvass Committee chair

February, 2010



🕊 Bob and Derek Bedard for replacing lights in the sanctuary.

🕊 Dotty Carrangi for repairing the round Canvass poster in the sanctuary

🕊 The Care Team for a magnificent job with Margot Cusimano's memorial service

🕊 Sandy Webster for working until 4:00 on Sunday, January 17 because of all of the checks collected for our two special collections

🕊 Everyone who contributed to our FINCA bank in Haiti. When other banks were closed because of the earthquake, ours remained open and was able to disburse funds. Special thanks to Kathy Hislip, who coordinates our FINCA program.

NEW PIANO COVER

Our grand piano has been with this church since the early 1900s. It has played a part in thousands of worship services. It has seen times of neglect and even once the possibility of being gotten rid of. But in the last 40 years or so there has been a concerted effort to restore it to its earlier beauty and sound quality. Thanks to several generous donations, the Mason Hamlin has been nearly completely refurbished.

Like the piano, the piano cover was also neglected—it certainly disappeared from regular use. Once the piano was refurbished, though, we sought to find the piano cover to protect the beautiful finish. We found the cover tucked away in the basement closet, chewed full of holes and covered by mouse droppings. It was cleaned up, the holes were patched, and we have used it ever since. But all the while some were thinking it would be nice to have a cover that matched the quality of the instrument it protected.

Then back on April 14, 2002, Donna Askins began constructing a quilt that would be such a piano cover. It has been a labor of love that has taken seven years and eight months to complete. It is made from 100% cotton. It measures approximately 81 sq. ft., and took approximately 1000 yards of thread and 360,000 stitches. The cotton will enable the wood of the piano to breathe.

I encourage you to take a few moments to admire the 360,000 stitches, and to thank Donna for this labor of love. It is a gift that will grace our sanctuary and the piano for decades to come.

--Dan Brosier

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO...

- 1 Dotty Carrangi
- 2 Lydia Larrabee
- 2 Ben Holish
- 5 Valerie Freeman
- 5 Kathie Wachholder
- 6 Pat Segel
- 6 Gloria Yaeger
- 6 Anne Bedard
- 7 Bob Jackson
- 10 Anne Branstrator
- 12 David Clough
- 13 Taylor Kremer
- 13 Aleks Lesiewicz

- 16 Cheren Waller
- 17 Bud Geister
- 17 Kyle Brinker
- 17 Steve Stultz
- 22 Sandy James
- 23 Savannah Underwood
- 24 Kai Engel
- 24 Leslie Sawyer
- 25 Mark Rodda
- 26 Greg Schmidlin
- 27 Kelly Wall
- 29 Carl Deitrick

BOOK GROUP

You are warmly invited to join the members of the Book Group at any of their upcoming meetings, which begin at 12:30 p.m.

📖 February 22 - *The Art of Racing in the Rain* by Garth Stein. At the home of Diana March.

📖 March 22 - Book TBD. At the home of Bonnie Schwank.

PAGAN UNITY UPDATE

Our December Yule Ritual and Potluck had an unusually large turnout of 48 adults and children more than ready to celebrate this joyous occasion! The Yule Log was lit by the Maiden, the Mother and the Matriarch. The old Holly King welcomed and crowned the new Oak King. There was singing, candle lighting, and a most bountiful feast afterwards.

Imbolc is scheduled for Saturday, February 6th at 6:00pm. It is now 6 weeks past Midwinter and the Winter Solstice. At the same time that the Ground Hog is traditionally coming out to look for his shadow, pagans are celebrating Imbolc. This is the beginning of the beginning of Spring. The days have gotten longer. The light of the Sun is returning and the Earth is beginning to awaken from the dark slumber of winter. See the calendar on page 3 for more details, or contact Sandy Russel.

Pagan Unity celebrations are open to the public, include a potluck feast and are family friendly. Celebrants are invited to [RSVP online](#).

WAYS TO GET IN TOUCH

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NEWS FROM THE STRATEGIC PLAN TASK FORCE

Community

Freedom of Belief and Spiritual Inquiry

Life-Long Learning

Social and Environmental Justice

What do all of these have in common? Each is the title of a section of UUCE's Vision. Since the Mission and Vision statements were accepted by the congregation in spring of 2008, the Board and Executive Team have been steadily moving into the next phase of our five-year plan: the Strategic Plan itself.

In 2009, the Board finalized "ends policies," two broad far-reaching goals for each of the four sections of the Vision. In November, the board charged the Strategic Plan Task Force with developing three to five sub-goals for each of the eight ends policies. The Strategic Plan Task Force also saw a need for a fifth section of the Vision: Stewardship.

The Strategic Plan Task Force is on schedule to present the final Strategic Plan at the annual congregational meeting this spring. Keep watching the *Unichord* for more information on progress!

Strategic Plan Task Force members: Kevin Sweeney, Andrea Schmidlin, Elizabeth Olson, Anne Ward, Melissa Owens, Ann Kremer, Debbie Caruso, and Dan Brosier.



The Unitarian Universalist Church of Elgin

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