Celebrating the Wheel of the Year

Pagan Unity, a group coordinated by Sandy Russel, is designed to offer an opportunity for all who wish to celebrate the Wheel of the Year to honor our Mother the Earth. The Wheel consists of eight Sabbat rituals wherein participants weave the bonds of community with singing, dancing, drumming and feasting.

All are invited: those who practice as Solitaries as well as those in small Covens, Circles or Moon Groups. In addition, nearly all Sabbats are designed to be inter-generational (kids welcome) and are open to the public.

Pagan Unity has been coordinating Wheel of the Year seasonal rituals for members and friends of the church for over three years. In accordance with our denomination’s Seventh Principle, Sabbats honor and celebrate our interdependence with all of nature. Observing the Wheel of the Year is one of the “Spiritual teachings of earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.”

Pagan Unity provides an open and safe environment to Meet and Greet other neo-pagans in the Elgin and Fox Valley area. To that end, a Meetup.com site entitled “Pagan Unity - Elgin” was created in June to further promote our activities outside the church.

Attendance at the First Harvest (Lughnasadh) in August and at the Second Harvest (Mabon) or Fall Equinox was markedly increased. For several people, this was their first visit to the UUCE.

The central act of magick of the Fall Equinox is a combination of two important rituals. As we enter the dark half of the year, we first give thanks for what we already have. This thankfulness is followed by magickally charging our intentions for what we will plant in our lives at the Spring Equinox, when the dark half of the year ends and the light half begins again.

The next ritual event that we are looking forward to is the Final Harvest on October 31st, also known as Samhain or the Witches’ New Year. Pagan Unity will celebrate this event in the Fellowship Hall at 9:00 p.m. and it will be for adults only. At this ritual, we honor our ancestors with a Spirit Supper/Memory Altar. Mortals will enjoy snacks (no potluck this time).

Samhain is the most serious and magickal of the Sabbats. We ponder our own mortality and the mystery of life and death, before the longest night of the year at the Winter Solstice, which occurs in another mere six weeks. To RSVP for Samhain, please contact Sandy Russel.
I was speaking to a member of our church community recently and she explained that it took her a while to decide to join because she questioned whether she could be a Unitarian Universalist and a Pagan—that she felt like she had to pick one or the other. She pointed out that the same question probably arises from those who feel drawn to both UUism and Buddhism or UUism and Christianity. Can someone be a UU and a follower of another faith?

The answer of course is “yes”—it is in fact the norm. This is the case because UUism is a creedless religion—that is we do not have a theology we all hold in common. We encourage people to find a theology that works for them—that helps them to live loving, compassionate, courageous, and joyful lives. Instead of uniting around a set of theological beliefs Unitarian Universalists share a set of principles about how to live in the here and now in a loving, respectful, responsible manner. This leads us to embrace theological diversity as something that enriches our lives.

Now if someone holds that their theological beliefs are the one and only truth in the universe, then most likely they won’t be comfortable in a UU church. Theological chauvinism runs counter to our principles. What makes a person a Unitarian Universalist is their belief in the spirit of our UUA principles. Join that with a theology that helps us be in right relationship with the forces that underlie the universe/God and you are right where you belong.

--Dan

THE MEANING OF LIFE
In many a story and movie understanding the meaning of life is the central quest of human beings. And so the quest continues. Service led by the Rev. Dan Brosier.

POETRY AND MUSIC
Is there a poem you learned yesterday or long ago that you know will never leave you? A song that carries with it a volume of memories? As with all arts, Poetry and Music have great power to speak to the mind and spirit. Join with us as a few of our number share pieces that have touched their lives. Service led by Susan P. Anderson.

REFLECTIONS ON DEATH
The awareness of our own mortality is one of the most powerful driving forces in our lives. It can either undermine our lives or bring energy and focus. Service led by the Rev. Dan Brosier.

WHAT WOULD UU DO?
This service takes a look at some current events, and what our faith calls us to do in the face of them. Service led by the Rev. Dan Brosier.

Get the Shirt
Official UUCE shirts, mugs, boxer shorts and more are now available at our Cafe Press website. Visit www.cafepress.com/uuce to browse the wares. Each item is priced at cost plus $3, and 100 percent of proceeds go to support the church’s operating fund. Besides serving as a fundraiser, this fun-raiser is a great way to let our little light shine. This design showcases the talents of graphics mastermind Todd Underwood.

Questions? Ask shopkeeper Donna Askins. The UUCE thanks you for your patronage.

SHARING THE PLATE
Half of each Sunday’s non-pledged cash donations collected are given to a charitable organization. In October we will support the Community Crisis Center, which provides emergency shelter for women and children and works to end 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.
October Calendar

**Worship Services**
Sundays at 10:45

**Adult Spirituality:**
**The Tao of Leadership**
Sundays, 9:00, room 302

**Adult Spirituality:**
**Progressive Parenting**
Book Circle
Sundays, 9:15, room 301

**Buddhist Group**
Thursdays at 6:30 in rooms 301 and 302

**Covenant Group**
October 6 and 20 at 7:00 (offsite)

**Choir Practice**
October 12 and 26 at 7:30 in the Sanctuary

**Unichords Handbell Practice**
Sundays at 9:00 in the Bell Room

**Unichords Performance**
October 4

**Board Meeting**
October 21 at 7:00 in the Fellowship Hall

**Care Team Meeting**
October 20, 10:00, Fellowship Hall

**Committee on the Ministry**
October 7 at 7:00

**Executive Team Meeting**
October 14 and 28 at 10:00

**Finance Committee**
October 14 at 7:00

**Green Sanctuary**
October 18 at 12:30 in room 301

**R.E. Council**
October 28 at 7:00

**Worship Committee**
October 4 at 9:15

**Unichord Deadline**
October 18

**Book Group**
October 19, at 12:30 (off-site)

**Circle Supper Potluck Kickoff**
October 17 at 6:00 in the Fellowship Hall

**QUUilters / Project Linus**
October 3, 9-12, room 302

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**The Tao of Leadership**
This 12-week adult spirituality class meets at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings in room 302. Each 90-minute session will focus on one lesson such as: Keeping Peace, The Way of Subtle Influence, Return to Simplicity, The Gravity of Power, Uniting The Forces, Oneness in Leadership, The Power of Effortlessness, Cultivating the Center, The Power in Compassion, Non-Aggressive Strength, and more. Contact Anne Ward or Bob Sandidge.
From the Director of Religious Education

The new church year is off and running! Six high school youth attended our youth retreat on September 18. After pizza, Dan Brosier led a chalice lighting and advisors Amy Hill and Anne Clough facilitated ice breakers and games. The youth developed a list of things they would like to learn and do this year. They will be leading a worship service in November. The evening ended with conversation and fun. And believe it or not, they were all asleep by 1:30 a.m!

This fall, there are some new programs. First, Family Friday will be the third Friday of the month, which is October 16. This will be an opportunity for families to share a meal and participate in a program that they can do together. Each month will have a different theme, so look for more details in the order of service and the e-list.

Next, I will be having a Friday Feature on October 9 at my home for anyone ages 14 and up. I often record programs on cable related to world religions, archeology, and different cultures, and wonder if there are others out there who enjoy these programs and would like to be able to discuss them with other folks. So, I decided to give it a try! The first program is from the series “Mysteries of the Bible” and is titled “Jerusalem: Holy, Deadly City.” Jerusalem has been the epicenter of activity for three religions for thousands of years, but also holds many secrets that few know. Sound intriguing? If the response is good, I would like to continue the Friday Feature idea this winter. Again, look for more details in the order of service and on the e-list.

For the young people, there will be social gatherings for each age group during the year as well as the Family Friday nights. If the weather is good, we will go to Goebbert’s Farm at the end of October.

In Faith,
Kathy

That Warm Secure Feeling

All who like to knit, crochet, quilt, or craft fleece blankets are invited to join the qUUilters this year as we embark on Project Linus. We are making blankets for children who are seriously ill, traumatized, or otherwise in need of love, warmth and comfort. Beginning October 3 and continuing on the first Saturday of every month, meet on the third floor of the church between 9:00 a.m. and noon -- drop in when you can or stay the whole time! This is an easygoing group, no pressure, and people with external plumbing are welcome. Contact Donna Askins.

Spiritual Parenting Group

The Progressive Parenting Book Circle (a.k.a., the Spiritual Parenting Book Circle) is an adult RE course open to all parents. The Circle’s first book is The Seven Spiritual Laws for Parents by Deepak Chopra. We meet at 9:15 on Sunday mornings in the 3rd floor couch room. Child care is available during this time. If interested, please come to the next meeting and/or contact Diana Jyoti. Due to the nature of participation, the deadline to join the group is Sunday, October 4.

This Month in Religious Education

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Preschool</th>
<th>K-2nd</th>
<th>3rd-5th</th>
<th>6th-8th</th>
<th>High School</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 4</td>
<td>Making Clay Chalices</td>
<td>Our Room, Our Community</td>
<td>Lesson For Life</td>
<td>Looking Toward Tomorrow</td>
<td>Continue planning worship service</td>
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<td>Oct. 11</td>
<td>Memory Game</td>
<td>A Walk Around the Church</td>
<td>The Good and the Bad</td>
<td>Thinking of God</td>
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<td>Oct. 18</td>
<td>Fall Plantings</td>
<td>More Church Friends</td>
<td>Clara Barton</td>
<td>Out of Nothing</td>
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<td>Oct. 25</td>
<td>Popcorn Party</td>
<td>Halloween</td>
<td>Dia de los Muertos</td>
<td>Thinking of Death</td>
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Member Pledges for the 2009-10 Fiscal Year as of August 31, 2009:

Budgeted: $24,881  Actual: $18,104

The 2009-10 Fiscal Year 12-month budget requires $149,285 income from pledges. Two months’ worth of this figure (July and August) = $24,881. We have received $18,104 in member pledges. Please contact Shari Smagatz, Treasurer, if you have any questions.

President’s Reflections

At the last few meetings, the Board has focused on the financial health of the Church. We have a few outstanding debts that are unpaid, as well as a deficit from the past fiscal year. If you are behind in paying your pledge, and can afford to catch up, this would be greatly appreciated. In the coming months, there will be discussions about how to collect money to pay off the capital campaign, which was scheduled to be retired, but has not been.

We are working towards ensuring a successful future by creating a Task Force which will write our Strategic Plan. This Strategic Plan will guide the congregation over the coming years by defining what goals we would like to meet, and how we might meet them. If you’re interested in being involved with this effort, please contact me or a member of the Board.

The children are back in school (Caitlin for the first time) and things are getting busy very quickly! As your nights and weekends fill with activity, don’t forget to make some time for quieting. I’m always amazed at how solutions appear to me when I give my mind a chance to rest.

Speaking of busy days, I’ve got to run. Make the most of your time, and I’ll see you around!

--Kevin

Buddhist Group Invites Newcomers

The Buddhism Group at UUCE has been meeting for several months now. With the start of a new church year, we wanted to make sure our fellow UUs are aware of the group and feel welcome to join us. The group meets every Thursday, usually at the church. People are asked to arrive by 6:45; meditation begins promptly at 7:00 and lasts an hour. This is followed by a short break, then a one-hour Dharma talk. The current text being studied is The Heart of the Buddha’s Teaching by Thich Nhat Hanh, which we will finish up in the next few weeks. The next book is still being decided upon, but will most likely be something from a western author, possibly someone with a UU background. All members and friends of UUCE are welcome to join us at any time. No experience necessary - just a healthy curiosity about Buddhism, yourself, and your world. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Dave Zobott or Diana March.

Wisdom Rising 2010

Anyone interested in being a part of Wisdom Rising 2010 as an organizer, facilitator or vendor? This festival celebrates a wide variety of healing arts such as yoga, gong meditation, and aroma therapy. Please contact Debbie Caruso debcaruso@yahoo.com, with the subject line: Wisdom Rising.

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.

October 19 - The Space Between Us by Thrity Umrigar. At the home of Alice Macy.

November 16 - Franny and Zooey by J.D. Salinger. Place to be determined.
October, 2009

FOOD DONATIONS NEEDED

The All People’s Inter-Faith Pantry needs to stock its shelves in anticipation of serving more people in October, November and December. Historically, the number of people being served goes up in these months.

The Pantry has a need for juice, cereal and jelly. Try to bring your donations on our Pantry Sunday, October 4. Look for the bin in the Fellowship Hall.

COMMUNITY ON THE MINISTRY

THIS LITTLE LIGHT: DEBBIE CARUSO

Debbie Caruso first attended UUCE about 2 ½ years ago while looking for a place that would perform baby blessings for her son Davey. She was particularly happy to discover UUCE’s religious education program in which children learn about different religions. The RE program and the active pagan community motivated her to stick around at UUCE. “I started referring to it as ‘my church.’” She became a formal member this summer after realizing that it would assist in her program planning goals at the church—a natural outgrowth of her volunteer and organizing efforts.

Most church members know Debbie for her efforts in spearheading Wisdom Rising, A Community Celebration of the Healing Arts, which took place for the first time this past May. The idea for this festival emerged from a conversation about bringing more healing artists to the church. Realizing that she had tapped a well of creativity and inspiration, she assumed leadership for planning and organizing a group of volunteers and contributors that made the day a success beyond expectation. “It got me doing what I really love doing, which is organizing events and putting on a show.” With her creative background and love of theatre, that is no surprise. Debbie worked for over a decade in Chicago black box, store front, non-equity theatre production and stage management. With a bachelor of fine arts degree, she graduated in 2005 from The School of Art Institute of Chicago. Her specialty was “conceptual political sculpture.” She becomes giddy when speaking about foundry, welding and any opportunity she can get to “pour, shape or form metal.”

Since giving birth to her son about four years ago, she has enjoyed her time as a stay-at-home mom, but is looking forward to working outside of the home again soon. She stays busy with volunteer work and as an active member of the Pagan Covenant group Fellowship of the Pagan Spirit. “I love the energies of the other people [in the Fellowship],” she states. She also feels connected to the moon phases and enjoys taking time to devote to ritual where, as she states, “I feel connected to the energies around me that I don’t take time for otherwise.” In addition, Debbie has been a stalwart gardener having donated time to the UUCE community garden on Wednesdays and Sundays. She also assisted greatly in the success of the 2008 service auction. Remember the magic of Emerald City? Thank you, Debbie, for all that you do for our community!

FALL PHOTOS

Click below to enjoy some autumn pictures of our prairie cathedral. Thanks to the hard work and dedication of members and friends, fall is a time of beauty, both indoors and out.
For helping with the All-Church Clean-Up: Debbie Caruso, Andrea Schmidlin, Sandy Sherman and Phil Webster, Carol Ovelmen, Gloria and Dave Yeager, Norm Wilkinson, Pat Pecho, Kathy Hislip, Dan Brosier, Mila Brinker.

For supporting the youth retreat: Dan Brosier, Amy Hill, Anne Clough, and Todd Underwood.

Men’s Group
Men of the UUCE are invited to join the men’s group. There is a choice to meet weekly, twice a month or monthly, at UUCE or a home to be named later.

Men’s groups have existed in many places for many years in various forms, but maybe not so much in our hurried 21st century. Questions to consider are:

- Have you experienced the value and power of male caring?
- Who could know and understand your concerns as well as other men?
- Do you appreciate honesty, candor, openness, confidentiality?
- Want a valid reason to get out of the house?

Check into what could be a new reality for you. Contact your fellow UUCE fellows, Doug Pratt or Bob Jackson, to learn more.

THE NEW U
The New U program is a two-session workshop designed to give people new to Unitarian Universalism some basic information about the faith in general, and this church in particular. The program is facilitated by the Chair of the Membership Committee, Kathy Hislip, and the minister, Dan Brosier. The next session will begin on Sunday, November 8 at 12:30 following the service. The second session will be the following Sunday at the same time. All interested in learning a bit more about UUism are encouraged to attend. A light snack will be provided. If you are interested please sign up on the designated clipboard on the visitors’ table on the first floor. If you would like childcare, please indicate so on the sign-up sheet by November 1. If you have any questions call Dan Brosier at the church.

GREEN CORNER
25 WAYS TO CREATE LESS TRASH
This list is from No Impact Man, March 17, 2009.

- Keep your own cutlery with you so you don’t have to use the plastic versions
- Cut up your old clothes for use as rags and avoid paper towels
- Use mason jars to carry everything from drinking water to a packed lunch
- Use a handkerchief instead of tissue
- Make notepaper from the blank side of junk mail
- Give old eyeglasses to the local Lions Club for distribution to those in need
- Make cardboard egg cartons into biodegradable seed starters
- Cut yogurt containers into strips and use them to label garden plants
- Use cloth bags for the bulk bins at the grocery store
- Empty out vacuum cleaner bags and reuse
- Use cloth napkins instead of paper towels
- Cook from scratch to avoid food packaging
- Use shaving soap bars to avoid throwaway bottles
- Make your own yogurt so there are no plastic tubs
- Wash and reuse ziplock bags
- Use the waxy liners of cereal boxes to wrap sandwiches
- Use scrap office paper for kids coloring books
- Carry a cloth for drying your hands and wrapping things in
- Pack a lunch in a reusable container instead of buying it in plastic packaging
- Use rechargeable batteries
- Carry your own coffee cup
- Carry a reusable bottle for refills at soda fountains
- Carry a collapsible plastic container for leftovers at restaurants

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS
1  Brandy Navadomski
3  Nikolas Spayne
3  Andy Garman
6  David Zobott
7  Marianne Lyons
8  Charlie Schmidlin
12  Laurie Kiesewetter
12  Emily Garman
12  Tyler Garman
15  Nicole Stecker
16  Chris Davis
16  Joy Shores
17  Shirley Wolin
17  Jim Hermann
18  Amy Schmidlin
19  Betsy Thrasher
20  Anne Clough
30  Emma Brosier
30  Mason Freeman
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