



DECEMBER 2012

Unichord



THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF ELGIN

Church Involvement Survey Results

Once a year, the UUCE Board of Trustees takes a survey of the congregation to see how things are going. This month, the Board shares data and church member comments from the section of the survey regarding the church's involvement in the greater community.

COMMENTS

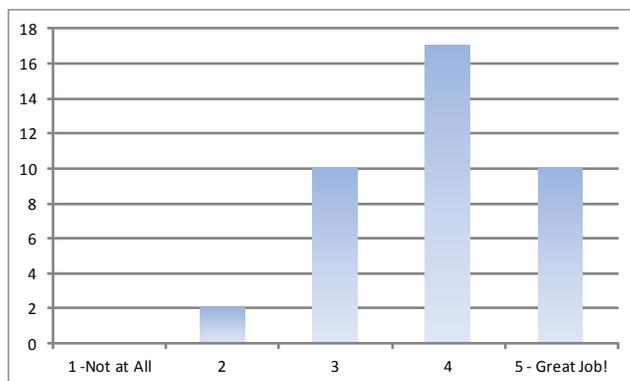
"Although lots of wonderful things happen within our walls, UUCE is not well-known in Elgin."

"I know our members are throughout the community working on projects. I am not aware how visible we are in the community. However, when we have a special event, it seems like it is well attended. Might be nice to have a UUCE Guest Night Pot Luck and open it to the community."

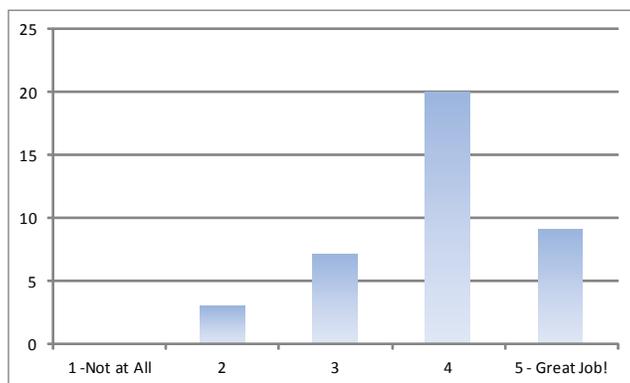
"A lot of our members are actively engaged in the community. I really appreciate those members sharing what they're doing. Example: a number of our members are active in Elgin sustainability committees. Apparently, our numbers there are enough that people might notice. We did really well in CROP Walk last year. I think we're showing up in our community more and more."

"I believe that individual members are involved in the community. I don't believe that the congregation is recognized as being involved in the community."

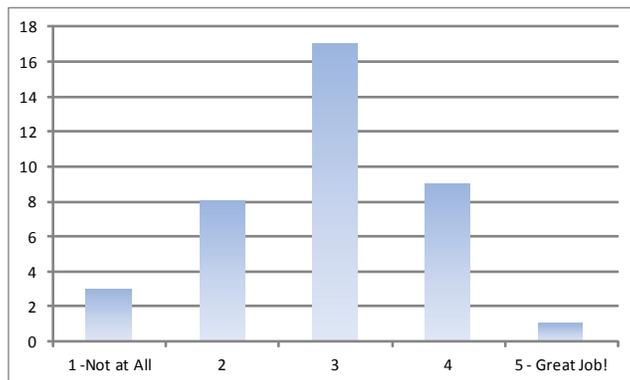
"We could do more to be visible. We do a very good job at making people feel welcome when they visit. There have been some very good efforts to be visible, including the farmers markets and the St. John's Bible exhibit. The labyrinth is a good draw and might be publicized more on an ongoing basis. Every time visitors show up on a weekday to do this, they express how impressed they are with the church."



We support and encourage members in their contacts and involvement in the community around us.



Our congregation is aware of, and involved in, local community affairs and issues.



Our congregation is visible and well known in the community.

From the Minister

A Meaning of Life from Monty Python's "The Meaning of Life"

CHAIRMAN: ...Item six on the agenda: the meaning of life. Now, uh, Harry, you've had some thoughts on this.

HARRY: Yeah, I've had a team working on this over the past few weeks, and, uh, what we've come up with can be reduced to [the following] fundamental concept: in the universe, there are many energy fields which we cannot normally perceive. Some energies have a spiritual source which act upon a person's soul. However, this soul does not exist *ab initio*, as orthodox Christianity teaches. It has to be brought into existence by a process of guided self-observation. However, this is rarely achieved, owing to man's unique ability to be distracted from spiritual matters by everyday trivia.

—Dan

SILENT NIGHT, SOLSTICE NIGHT

Silent night, Solstice Night

Silver moon shining bright

Snowfall blankets the slumbering Earth

Yule fires welcome the Sun's rebirth

Hark, the Light is reborn

Hark, the Light is reborn

Silent night, Solstice Night

Earth lies still, dreams shine bright

Flesh and Spirit meet in the dark

Spiraling deep to touch the spark

Heal in Winter's deep sleep

Heal in Winter's deep sleep

A Month of Sundays

12/2: BREAKING BREAD TOGETHER

Our annual bread communion service when we recognize and celebrate the gifts that come through community. Service led by the Rev. Dan Brosier.

12/9: DECK THE HALLS

We mark the holiday season with a service devoted to decking our building out in holiday spirit and in so doing encourage it within ourselves. The morning begins in the sanctuary for a few minutes of opening words and music, and then we split up into various activities. It is a morning of activity and good cheer.

12/16: STEPS TOWARDS RIGHT RELATIONSHIP

We have spoken of the need and benefits of living in right relationship. Now it is time to explore how we create it in our lives. Service led by the Rev. Dan Brosier.

12/23: WINTER INTERGENERATIONAL

A holiday service for all ages to enjoy. Service brought to you by our Religious Exploration and Education programs.

12/24: CHRISTMAS EVE

Come join us as we celebrate the magic of the season through song and story. This year's service begins at 7:00 PM. Following the service there will be refreshments and participants are encouraged to bring an hors d'oeuvre to share. Service led by the Rev. Dan Brosier.

12/30: MEET SADIE

What moral obligations do we have to the animals who share our lives as companions, food, or zoo inhabitants?

Services begin at 10:45.

December Calendar

Worship Services

Sundays at 10:45

Christmas Eve Service

December 24 at 7:00

Adult Religious Exploration and Education

December 2 and 9 at 9:00 in rooms 301 and 302

Board of Trustees Meeting

December 19 at 7:00 in the Fellowship Hall

Board meetings are open to the congregation.

Book Group—Afternoon

December 31 at 12:30 (offsite)
Contact [Alice Macy](#)

Book Group—Evening

December 28 at 7:00 (offsite)
Contact [Beth Cooper-Zobott](#)

Buddhist Group

Thursdays at 7:00 (offsite)
Contact [Carl Deitrick](#)

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CHURCH RENTAL

December 21 at noon

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Committee on the Ministry

December 5 at 7:00

Deck the Halls

December 9 at 10:45 during the service

Executive Team

December 12 at 10:30

Handbells Rehearsal

Sundays at 12:30 in room 203

Improv Group

Sundays at 7:00 in the Sanctuary

Pagan Unity

Ritual and Potluck
December 19 at 6:30 in the Fellowship Hall

Quilting

December 1 at 9:00 in room 302

Unichord deadline

December 23

Western Crescent Ministers Meeting

December 19 at 11:00 in room 301

If You *Must* Send a Holiday Card...

...Send a scrip card from the church!

Consider:

- No extra driving around
- No shopping at websites that might misuse your information
- No shipping charges
- No wondering if or when the package will arrive
- One size really DOES fit all!
- And last but not least: you make a much-needed contribution toward keeping the church's bills paid.

GREAT DEALS:

- Buy an iTunes gift card, and UUCE gets a **10%** rebate. This is a great gift for kids!
- For the book lovers on your list, Barnes & Noble offers a **9%** rebate.

Everyone can find something with an Amazon gift certificate, and some may appreciate a gift card for Applebee's, Dunkin' Donuts, Panera, or Starbucks.

You can order scrip cards at the table in the downstairs lobby every Sunday 12:00 to 12:30, and pick them up the following Sunday. Please support this UUCE fundraiser.

Pagans Celebrate Solstice

Join Pagan Unity on December 19 at 6:30 to celebrate Yuletide and the Winter Solstice, the shortest day and longest night of the year, with a ritual and potluck feast. Since it's the longest night of the year, we'll be decorating our altar and ritual space with the light of many, many, candles! Everyone will be invited to light a candle symbolizing what they will bring into the light by the next Solstice. We will tell the story of the new-born Oak King and bid farewell to the old Holly King while the Maiden, Mother and Crone will bless and light the Yule Log. Feel free to wear something flowing and if you have any drums or jingle bells please bring those along too!! We traditionally do a lot of singing at this ritual, so come prepared for alternative lyrics to some of your favorite Christmas Carols—see example at right.

From the Director of Religious Exploration and Education



With this issue of the newsletter, the winter holidays are upon us. For many of us, it is a harried time rather than a reflective and spiritual time. While it seems that we cannot control this pressure, in reality it is usually completely in our control. We can always say, "Sorry, but I can't

do that right now—or tomorrow—or next week." This, of course, is hard to do, especially to the ones we love.

I'm sure there are many practical ways of dealing with holiday stress. I am not an expert on this by any means! I succumb to the pressure like many. Over the years I have learned to be easier on myself. I have given myself permission to forego some of the traditions I used to think were important: little things

like stringing popcorn for the holiday tree, baking an endless supply of cookies, and keeping the house clean 24-7.

I encourage you to talk about this over a family dinner. Ask your partner and/or children what one tradition is most meaningful to them. You may be surprised at the answers! You can then make an action plan of who will help do what to make that tradition happen. If you're willing to let go of some of the control, you will be able to enjoy the true meaning of the holidays a bit more. Easier said than done? Perhaps, but why not give it a try? Let me know what your family decides, and if I get a lot of replies, I will compile them into one email and send it to the list. Who knows, it may inspire you in some creative way.

In Faith,
—Kathy

December Religious Exploration and Education

	Preschool	K-2	3-5	6-8	High School
Dec. 2	How Many Days Until Christmas?	Our History	Power	The Rapture	When Do You Give What You Can't Afford to Give?
Dec. 9	Deck the Halls Intergenerational – no classes				
Dec. 16	Mary Had a Baby	Our Search	Spirit of Life	Thinking About Souls	When Have You Felt Your Whole World Collapse?
Dec. 23	Winter Intergenerational – no classes				
Dec. 30	Candles For Winter	Our Words Matter	Courage	Thinking About Church	Covenant with God/ Universe/Spirit
	Preschool	K-2	3-5	6-8	High School

December 9 is the last Adult Spirituality class until the New Year.

President's Reflections

Happy Hanukkah (12/8—12/16)

Happy Winter Solstice (12/21)

Merry Christmas (12/25)

Happy Kwanzaa (12/26—1/1)

Happy New Year! (1/1)

There are many ways to give back or pay it forward at this time of year. One opportunity that I really enjoy participating in at the church is the Giving Tree for the Larkin Center. Others include Toys for Tots, adopting a family through Hanover Township, donating extra food for the various food pantries—the lists goes on and on

as to the possibilities. Nothing is too small of a donation when it is from the heart. I hope this year all the tags from the Giving Tree will be taken in a timely manner and as many people as possible will be able to participate. I hope everyone has an enjoyable and safe holiday, whatever you celebrate!



Thanks,
—Debbie

Service Auction February 9

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

October 16, 2012

Members Present:

B. Cooper-Zobott, B. Thrasher, D. Brosier (representing the Executive Team), D. Clough, D. Yeager, D. Caruso, S. Day, T. Davis.

Reports:

- A. Financial Report—Approved
- B. Earmarked Funds Report—Approved
- C. Executive Team Report—
 1. Treatment of Staff IIC: This policy speaks to how the church staff is treated. This part of the Executive Team report described the extent to which the policy was complied.
 2. D. Yeager will fix malfunctioning exit light
 3. Endowment Committee owes Board of Trustees (BOT) a report
 4. Committee on the Ministry (COM) Report – it was determined that

COM does not need to report to BOT

5. Website URL provided to members for review

Unfinished Business:

- A. Deficit Discussion—a meeting between the BOT and the Finance Committee will be scheduled
- B. Water Test—D. Brosier had to retest the water and overnight the water sample. The previous sample was delivered via standard mail which was too slow by testing standards.

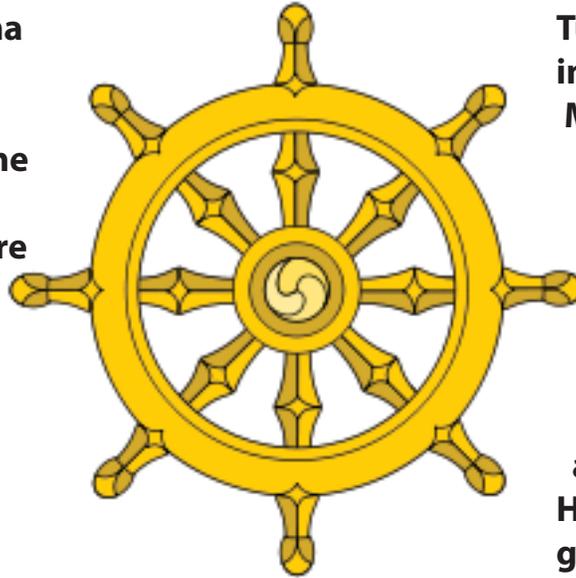
New Business:

- A. Convene Task Force on Staff Compensation
 1. New recommendations from UUA have been delayed until July 2013
 2. A new Task Force will be formed

Wheel of Life

Chris Davis's mother, Wilma Lueck, died October 22 after years of living with dementia. Born in 1919, she was two days away from her birthday. Our hearts are with Chris, and all of the Davis family.

Mitch Kremer, longtime member and friend of the church, passed away on



Tuesday, November 13 in Barrington. He was 54. Mitch was a loving husband and father who supported his children in all their endeavors. Family and friends always came first in Mitch's life. He spent his career advocating for people with disabilities and youth in foster care. He enjoyed photography, gardening, music and travel.

Survivors include his wife of 25 years, Ann Kremer, whom he married on August 8, 1987, and his son, Austin, and daughter, Taylor. He is also survived by siblings Michelle, Christy, Laura Kelly, Joanna, and John; parents-in-law, Gene and Mary Beno; sister-in-law, Jane, brothers-in-law, Jim and David, and many loving nieces and nephews.

In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts may be given to the [Unitarian Universalist Church of Elgin](#), [Life Raft Group](#), [Hospice Foundation of Northeastern Illinois](#), or [Northern Illinois Special Recreation Association](#). Online condolences may be sent to the family at davenportfamily.com.

We mourn.



Actual:
\$54,519

Pledge Income

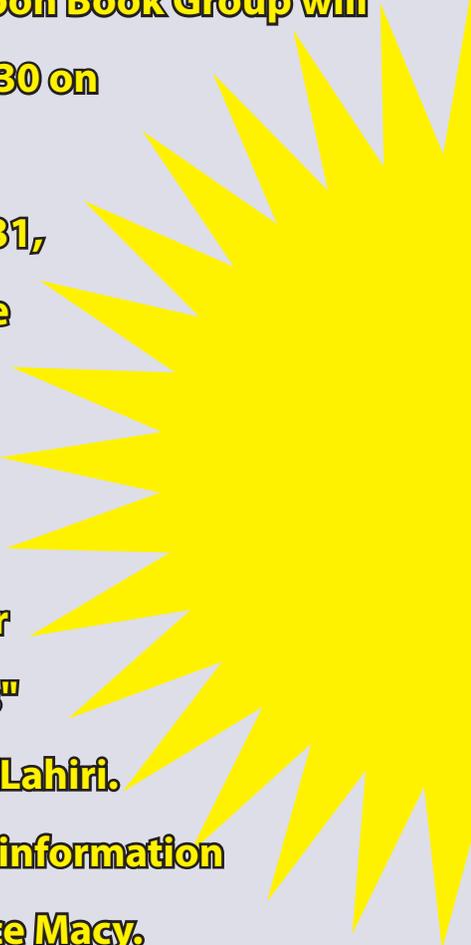


Budgeted:
\$52,200

We're Truly Thankful That You Were Born

3	Bob Sandidge	12	Kurt Wachholder	23	Leslie Yoshitani
4	Tim King	14	Jennifer Day	24	Teresa Stultz
6	Rusty Winchel	15	Kassia Lesiewicz	24	David Nunes (Caruso)
7	Linda Porter	15	Meg (TianTian) Laflin	27	Marilyn Hendry
7	Mike Moutrie	19	Ethan Fincher	27	Avery Bedard
8	Ryan Flanagan	20	Roberta Nauman	28	Benjamin Sharani (Swain)
8	Jun Yoshitani	20	Barbara Sugden	30	Doug Pratt
10	Kole Talaga	20	Maxine Saunders	31	Ed Wall
11	Paul Hanfl	23	Hannah Day		
11	Jim Bottino				

The Afternoon Book Group will meet at 12:30 on Monday, December 31, at the home of Alice Macy to discuss "Interpreter of Maladies" by Jhumpa Lahiri. For further information contact Alice Macy.



The December meeting of the UUCE evening book club will take place on Friday, December 28 at 7:00 at the home of Beth Cooper-Zobott. The December selection is: "Sarah's Key" by Tatiana de Rosnay. Please bring ideas for what you would like to read for January, February and March 2013.

Ways to Get in Touch

WEBSITE

www.uuce.org

E-MAIL

minister@uuce.org

administrator@uuce.org

newsletter@uuce.org

PHONE

847-888-0668

PHYSICAL LOCATION

39W830 Highland Avenue
three miles west of Randall Rd.

POSTAL MAIL

P. O. Box 1032
Elgin, IL 60121

Front of Card: "It Seems Only Right to Celebrate Our Friendship With Deodorant"

Inside of card: "So this holiday season, I gave some to the All People's Inter-Faith Pantry in your name."

Just imagine the smiles on everyone's faces when you give such a gift! You can substitute deodorant with toilet paper,

shampoo, facial soap, or dish detergent, or even a tasty seasonal treat, such as peanut butter, jelly, cereal, or juice.

Try to bring your donations on our Pantry Sunday, December 2, but as always, your contributions are welcome anytime during the month.



The Unitarian Universalist Church of Elgin

P. O. Box 1032 • Elgin, IL 60121

