



Unichord

JULY 2014



THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF ELGIN

There Are Two Kinds of Covenants

Our *church covenant* defines how members of the congregation behave toward one another. Everyone's input is desired. When all voices have been heard (or as many as possible), we write down our covenant. It is our promise to one another.

BOTH COVENANTS ARE FEATURED IN THIS MONTH'S UNICHORD.

The Covenant Committee is working on leading the congregation in the creation of a new **UUCE COVENANT STATEMENT**. A Covenant Statement, which will guide UUCE for several years, defines in a nutshell how church members agree to relate to each other, with mutual respect and in the spirit of love, whether in good times or in conflict.

To participate in drafting the UUCE Covenant Statement, **everyone is invited to attend a workshop on July 13**. It will be based on UUA suggestions, with a healthy sprinkling of UUCE flavor. There will be three different formats: small group discussion, journaling, and drawing.

The first workshop on June 29 focused on Hopes and Promises. Attendees developed "consensus about the primary commitments [promises] the congregation wants to make to one another as members."

The list of promises made by those gathered took into account things like physical behavior, communication, financial commitment, and volunteering.

On **July 13**, the topic will be

Find out on page 7!

A *covenant group* is a small group of congregation members who intentionally join in fellowship with one another; they commit to one another. These groups are loving and non-judgmental. Deep friendships develop that often last a lifetime.

Last spring Adult REE offered a six-week covenant group on transitions, both personal and church-related. It was so popular that it was split into two groups, and those who attended expressed significant interest in starting new **COVENANT GROUPS**.

Tim and Elizabeth Closson belong to such a group. It has taken on the project of responding to the interest expressed.

WHAT IS IT LIKE TO BE IN A COVENANT GROUP?

Tim said, "Three or four years ago, Elizabeth and I became part of a long-running group. We really had no idea what to expect, but we were pleased beyond our wildest hopes and expectations. We found: love and acceptance, a place to share without judgment, a forum for stimulating conversation. We found laughter, tears, hugs and smiles."

He added, "No, this is not a group therapy session. It is our Covenant Group."

WHAT DO COVENANT GROUPS DO?

Find out on page 6!

Lise's Letter



It's summer time, and hopefully that means that many of you will get to have some rest and relaxation, whether it involves traveling far away or simply doing

some different activities close to home. This renewal is well deserved and needed for all of us at UUCE, for it's been a very busy year. We've all had new ideas and possibilities to consider, not to mention new people to get to know and different ways of doing things. Transitions can be very tiring, whether you're trying to accomplish specific tasks or simply breathing into the moment. Even though folks haven't always openly mentioned it, I know many are still missing Rev. Dan, his presence, and way of doing things. That grief can affect your energy level as well. I've enjoyed getting to know him this year through our monthly breakfast dates and know that he is definitely worth missing. He was a big part of UUCE and will continue to be part of the UUCE culture in ways big and small. Dan is your minister emeritus, and once you have your new settled minister, he/she/ze and Dan can decide how they'd like Dan to participate at UUCE as a ministerial colleague and as your minister emeritus.

One of the transitions that has taken a lot of energy this year involved our experiment with a different format for Shared Reflections. In April and May we tried having this element of the service after the closing circle. Worship assistants who facilitated the post-service conversations kept track of when the service ended (11:50 - 11:55), the number of folks attending the conversation

(most Sundays it averaged about five) and about how long the discussion lasted (five-fifteen minutes). I also kept track of emails sent to me regarding this topic. All of this information was brought forward and discussed at the May worship committee meeting, at which time the Worship Committee and the minister decided to keep the new format. One comment I've heard from several people is that this new format encourages more conversation about the service. These discussions often happen in the fellowship hall, not just in the sanctuary after the service.

Another change we are in the midst of is having worship services every Sunday all summer long. So far, while not as busy as during the regular year, attendance numbers have been good. There will be many more lay led services this summer, so I hope you'll come support your fellow congregants—we UUs always have interesting opinions to share!

I'll be gone July 10-24 and August 13-19 for family stuff, and my husband will be arriving in August to live with me in Elgin for my second year here (hooray!). When I am in town, you'll usually be able to find me at church during my office hours (Tuesday and Friday from 10:00-1:00) unless I have an unavoidable meeting. Please remember that Mondays are my Sabbath so I'm in communication blackout mode from Sunday evening through Tuesday morning. If there's an emergency, please call my cell.

Enjoy this growing time of year.

Love,
—Lise

Reverend Lise Adams Sherry,
Interim Minister

A Month of Sundays July

7/6: **My Country Tis of Thee**

It seems appropriate to reflect on our country at this time of year. What does it mean to be a citizen and/or a patriot today? How can we get into this club, and do we want to? Service led by Reverend Lise Adams Sherry.

7/13: **Accentuate the Positive**

In a world filled with disgruntled players and often justified complaint, what would it be like to be a beacon of positivity? Service led by Susan Anderson.

7/20: **The Spirituality of Sailing**

Otherwise titled "how I learned to use what's given to me" this talk will take you along on my sailing lesson. Service led by Elizabeth Closson.

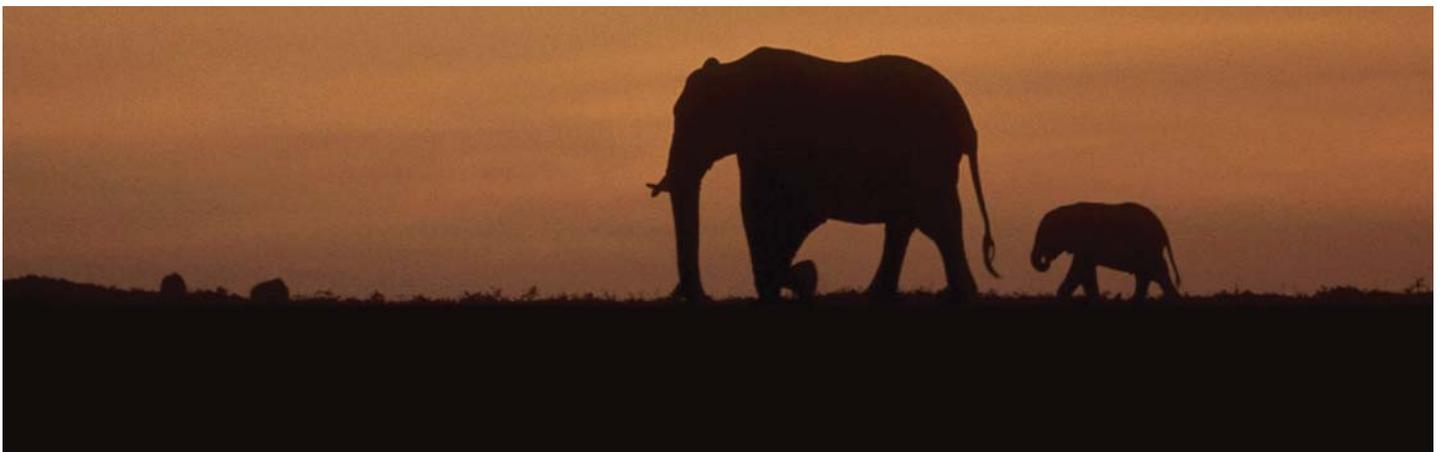
7/27: **From a Local Foundation of Compassion to a Global Platform of Action for Wildlife**

Charlie Knowles, who grew up as a member of UUCE, will share his experiences in founding one of the world's leading wildlife conservation organizations. Guest speaker: Charles Knowles, Executive Director, Wildlife Conservation Network.

Services begin at 9:45

Elgin UU Protects Wildlife

On July 27, UUCE will have the good fortune to hear from Charles Knowles, Executive Director of the **Wildlife Conservation Network** (WCN). Raised as a Unitarian Universalist in Elgin, Charlie retired early as a successful Stanford-educated entrepreneur in Silicon Valley. He founded software company Rubicon Technology in 1989 and sold it in 1994. His retirement lasted six days, until he launched full-time into applying his business acumen and experience to wildlife conservation. In the 1990s, Charlie helped the Cheetah Conservation Fund and the Snow Leopard Conservancy grow into world-class conservation programs. In doing so, he recognized the opportunity for a new model of wildlife conservation, and in 2002 he co-founded the Wildlife Conservation Network to identify, qualify and invest in the best and brightest conservationists around the world. To date WCN has deployed over \$40 million in 40 countries around the world to save such iconic species as elephants, lions, and monkeys. The synthesis of creativity and practicality in Charlie's approach has inspired thousands of passionate donors, as well as a rising generation of conservation pioneers.



Lifespan Religious Exploration and Education



Over the summer, we are collecting old crayons for SCARCE. This organization collects broken crayons and melts them to make larger crayons for developmentally disabled

children to use. They also collect school supplies, old books, and shoes. So go through your crayon boxes this summer, and bring any broken and unused crayons to UUCE. There is a collection basket in Fellowship Hall. At the end of the summer, we'll have a sorting party along with ice cream sundaes!

On July 13, **Christina Fixemer** will be doing a program for the young people on photography. She asks that youngsters bring an old camera or cell phone to take pictures. If any other folks have an old camera or phone that they would be willing to let them use, please let either me or **Christina** know.

This month in Religious Exploration and Education:

July 6: "Stink Water" – story from Wales and making a water garden

July 13: "Photography"

July 20: "Tie Dye"

July 27: "Stomp Rockets"



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 church thanks you for your patronage.

I am still looking for help in every aspect of our lifespan program. If you are seeking a meaningful way to contribute your time and talents, here are some of the ways you can do so:

- Co-teach a class – for adults, teens or children
- Assist in a class for preschool, Kindergarten-2nd, or 3rd-5th grades
- Help plan adult programming
- Be on the Religious Exploration and Education (REE) Team to coordinate activities and social action
- Share your hobbies, passions, and experiences with youngsters and/or teens
- Co-facilitate the Our Whole Lives Sexuality program – males only please!

The sooner I can get help, the better I can prepare and train you! If any of these interest you, I can give you more detailed information.

In Faith,

—**Kathy Underwood**

Director of Religious Exploration and Education



President's Reflections



I want to share with you my personal excitement about the beginning work of the Settled Minister Search Committee (SMSC). Last week the first part of the Board meeting was combined with the initial gathering of the SMSC.

We had a guest, Rev. Emmy Lou Belcher, who is assigned to our congregation as the Ministerial Search Representative (MSR) from the UUA Transition Office. Emmy Lou explained to us all the responsibilities of the Board in supporting the SMSC, then she left with them to another room to help them get started.

By the end of their first meeting, the SMSC had begun to get their feet wet and had planned a day long retreat to get themselves fully organized. The retreat will be led by an outside consultant who will help them learn how to combine their personal styles so they can work optimally together. They will also learn and refine other skills needed to lead our search.

The SMSC will be doing a lot of work that will be confidential. The confidentiality will center around initial screenings of candidates who may be in ministry elsewhere and not want their current congregation to know they are looking, or other such issues. Be assured our SMSC will tell us anything they are able to share.

The reason I am so excited is this: we have begun the final stage of finding our next settled minister. The SMSC is shouldering the majority of this responsibility for the time being, and the BoT is enthusiastically doing it's part. We have nine BoT members plus seven SMSC members, a total of sixteen dedicated people, who are willing and (more than) able to contribute to UUCE in this way.

Aren't we lucky?

Those folks will be seeking everyone's input and support in various ways during the coming months. Please help them whenever they ask.

— **Elizabeth Closson**
President,
UUCE Board of Trustees

Heigh-ho! Heigh-ho! It's Off to Work They Go!

On Saturday, June 28, the Settled Minister Search Committee took the first of many, many steps in their journey: they participated in a day-long retreat led by an outside consultant. Dan Hislip was chosen as their fearless leader! Woo-hoo!



Creating Covenant Groups

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Covenant groups usually consist of eight to twelve members who decide where to meet – at the church or at a member's home – and how often to meet. Some covenant groups may be formed around a specific subject – such as the Seventh Principle or simple living, etc. – while others may discuss a variety of topics chosen by the members, or perhaps a book.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Over the summer, the Clossons' covenant group plans to explore the level of interest, lay the ground work, seek out facilitators and align new covenant groups. Their hope is that these new groups will be ready to hit the ground running in the Fall. Developments will be shared via weekly announcements and future Unichord articles.

In the meantime, feel free to reach out to **Kathy Hislip**, **Elizabeth Closson**, or **Tim Closson** to express interest or ask questions.

July Calendar

Worship Services

Sundays at 9:45

Afternoon Book Group

July 28 at 12:30—offsite

Board of Trustees Meeting

Unknown at press time—
please check church calendar

Buddhists

Thursdays at 7:00

Executive Team

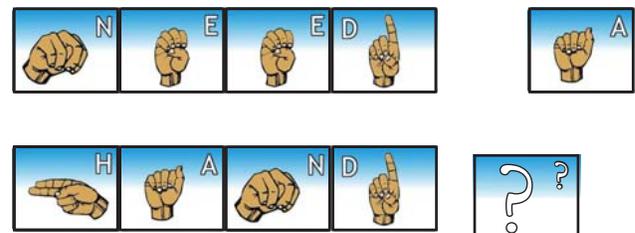
July 9 at 11:00

Finance Committee

Unknown at press time—
please check church calendar

Goddess Salon and Labyrinth Walk

July 27 from 12:00—2:00
in Fellowship Hall



The Care Team coordinates the church's efforts in caring for our members and friends at significant and/or vulnerable times in their lives. Contact **Leslie Yoshitani** or **Rev. Lise Adams Sherry** with such concerns.

Please check the church's online calendar for the most current information.

Creating Our Church Covenant

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Creative Covenant Writing Workshops will be available from 8:00-9:30 and from 11:15-12:45. Creative Covenant Writing will build on the previous meeting, but members don't necessarily need to have attended. The workshop will start by reflecting on important relationships that individuals have had, and what qualities made those relationships so important. From there, the group will consider the Hopes and Promises gathered on June 29. Attendees will take time to reflect on and add to the lists, and

use them to write draft covenant statements. These will then be considered by the Covenant Committee.

The Covenant Committee consists of Andrea Budasi, Debbie Caruso, Elizabeth Closson, Elizabeth Olson, Jason Engel, Rev. Lise Adams Sherry, and Stephen Day. Feel free to contact any Committee member if you have questions.

Peace,
Jason Engel

Transition Team Update

The Transition Team (TT) has been busy. About 12 people attended the grief workshop facilitated by Elise Wall on June 8. The conversation was productive and supportive. The TT also hosted a growth talk on June 22; more than 20 people attended. This meeting generated lots of information and ideas to support UUCE now and in the future.

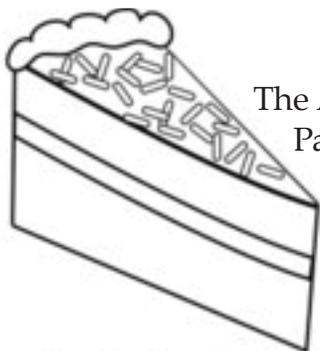
The Team is in the process of typing up the notes and organizing the information

gathered. These notes will be shared with the BOT and the SMSC. Watch next month's *Unichord* for details.

The TT doesn't have any events planned for the next month, but warmly encourages all members of the congregation to **attend the church covenant workshop on July 13**.

—Your Transition Team,
**Ann Kremer, Elizabeth Olson, Kathy Hislip,
Michelle Sweeney, and Mike Moutrie**

Let Them Eat —



The All People's Inter-Faith Pantry needs pork and beans, cans of tuna and canned meats. They can also use cereal, and SMALL jars of jelly and peanut butter.

Try to bring your donations on our Pantry Sunday, July 6, but your donations are welcome on any Sunday.

Pledge Income

Collected:
\$161,056

Budgeted:
\$165,933

97%!



Lights for the Lavs, Step Four

The Green Team has been working on the issue of over-lighting and high energy consumption in the first floor lavatories. Eight 40-watt incandescent light bulbs were over the sinks, with an additional four-tube florescent fixture lighting the toilet areas. The florescent fixtures provided an opportunity to reduce the over lit condition to more normal illumination by removing tubes from the fixtures.

It was also noted that UUCE has a history of leaving lav lights on while not in use, sometimes even over the weekend.

The Team decided to move past compact fluorescent lights (CFL) with a view toward replacing the existing incandescent bulbs with light

emitting diodes (LEDs). The challenge was to balance the initial cost of the LEDs versus the CFLs.

Fully understanding the principles that, "It always takes longer," and "Expect the unexpected," the Green Team proceeded. LEDs with a "standard base" were identified, purchased and installed. Tubes were removed from the fluorescent fixtures, saving the energy cost for two 32-watt tubes on one side and two 40-watt tubes on the other.

The problem of facility users leaving the lights on even while the lavs are unused raised the question of whether some sort of replacement switch would help UUCE save energy. Light switches with three alternative and

programmable functions have been purchased. Because we are mindful of the problem of the "unexpected" we will prototype the switches in the men's Lav only.

If the switch works as described, it can be turned on and off manually (push-button). In addition it will automatically turn off after a 15 minute delay. But with any one of the three available settings there are some potentially awkward situations. Let's just consider the current setting of a 15 minute delay. Supposing there are multiple visits to the Lav spaced over a 20 minute time period. The 15 minute delay will begin when the first visitor arrives. But the last visitor may have the lights turned out automatically before they are ready to leave. There are no windows and the spaces do get quite dark. What if some unexpected visitor is literally left in the dark? This uncertainty has led the Team to try a "prototype" with the men as our "research subjects."

The Green Team is eager for feedback and pointers on how to make this project work better. [Contact DJ](#) or any member of the Green Team.

CFL Light Bulb



LED Light Bulb



VS

LEDs are more efficient than CFLs.



KUDOS!

- To Mila for organizing the carpet cleaning and all those folks who moved chairs and other furniture to facilitate this process.
- To the board for working so hard and making lots of phone calls to get UUCE a settled minister search committee.
- To the settled minister search committee for being willing to donate their time and talents to take on this wonderful task: Dan Hislip, Diana March, Doug Pratt, Joe Masonick, Susan Anderson, Valerie Howells, and Lydia Larrabee.
- To the Vocal Ensemble, Shirley Loebel, Shari Smagatz and Dan Kalbrenner for donating

- their musical talents for Sunday services.
- To the REE kids who helped plant 104 seedlings and flowers around the community garden.
- To all the folks helping to make UUCE grounds beautiful: the lawn mowing folks, landscapers Mary Alice Masonick, Mary Gaston, Leslie and Jun Yoshitani, Sheena John and others!, REE volunteers and children who have helped with the garden, and our regular garden crew consisting of Donna Askins, her community helpers Becki Potempa and Ernesto Orozco, and more.
- To Tim Closson, for his generous donation of several pairs of new gloves for the garden workers.

- And long overdue, to Joe Masonick who worked his saw off making countless mini-greenhouses so newbies could learn to garden. His generosity paid off beyond the church. Thanks to Joe, a troop of boy scouts based at Isaac Walton League grew radishes; beginners at Sherman Hospital got hands-on lessons and projects to take home; and people interested in gardening got to try it on the spot at a public spring kick-off. And, food grown at Sherman has already helped out a local food pantry. Kindness really does pay forward.

It's YOUR TURN

to say what you think UUCE should be like. How would you like our community to be? How do you wish we would treat one another? **SPEAK UP on JULY 13** after the worship service by attending the covenant workshop. Remember the adage: "If you don't vote, you can't complain."



Book Group Shares the Love

The Afternoon Book Group will meet at 1:00 on Monday, July 28, at the home of Dotty Carringi to discuss "**My Beloved World**" by Sonia Sotomayor.

For more information, contact **Alice Macy**.

Our Church Is For The Birds!

We are a Wildlife Welcoming Congregation! Over forty species are known to have shared our space at one time or another. This new list will definitely grow as birders in the congregation identify more species. If you have observed other birds at UUCE, please add them to the bird list on the Green Sanctuary table in Fellowship Hall.

Indeed, many animals and plants call UUCE home. Our property was certified as a Backyard Wildlife Habitat by the National Wildlife Federation in 2004. To qualify, a yard must provide wildlife with the basics of food, water, cover, and a place to raise their young. This was fairly easy thanks to the focus on native landscaping at UUCE. If you are interested in creating your own Backyard Wildlife Habitat, [learn how](#) at the National Wildlife Federation.

American Crow

American Goldfinch



American Redstart

American Robin

Black-throated Green Warbler

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher

Brown-headed Cowbird

Canada Goose

Cedar Waxwing

Chestnut-sided Warbler

Chimney Swift

Common Grackle

Common Nighthawk



Common Yellow-throat

Dark-Eyed Junco

Eastern Bluebird

Eastern Kingbird

Eastern Meadowlark

Eastern Towhee

European Starling

Field Sparrow

Gray Catbird

House Wren

Indigo Bunting

Killdeer

Mourning Dove

Nashville Warbler

Northern Cardinal

Northern Flicker

Red-Eyed Vireo

Red-tailed Hawk

Red-winged Blackbird

Ruby-throated Hummingbird

Sandhill Crane

Savannah Sparrow

Song Sparrow

Tennessee Warbler

Tree Swallow

Turkey Vulture

Warbling Vireo

Veery



Service Auction

UUCE Board of Trustees Minutes

May 21, 2014

Members present: Bridget Laflin, Debbie Caruso, Elizabeth Closson, Krista Flanagan, Mary Knapp, Stephen Day, Tim Davis.

Others attending: Jamie Yucuis, Jason Engel, Jun Yoshitani, Reverend Lise Adams Sherry.

I. OPENING

- a. Centering
- b. Approval of Agenda
- c. One minute Check-ins

II. APPROVAL OF APRIL 2014 MINUTES — Minutes approved by consensus.

III. REPORTS

- a. Transition Team Report
 - i. Grief workshop being offered by Elise Wall on June 8.
 - ii. Open Congregation meeting on June 22.
- b. Financial/Earmarked Funds Report
 - i. Check Signing
 - ii. Reviewed new budget report format used by PowerChurch. Fixed asset changes would require a formal evaluation. Based on historical element of accounting.
 - iii. Lise shared information on payment of musicians and child care workers. Krista and Jamie are working on end-of-year closing.
 - iv. March and April reports approved by consensus.

c. Minister Disability Insurance and Life Insurance.

i. Disability Insurance listed in budget as fair market value.

ii. Motion made by Stephen that UUCE reimburse Lise for \$100,000 for life insurance. Seconded by Debbie Caruso. Motion passed.

d. Scrip Bank Account. Motion made by Bridget Laflin to have Joe Masonick transfer the balance of Scrip Account to our operating budget. Seconded by Stephen Day. Motion passed.

e. Minister's Report and Q & A

i. Looking at moving the sign closer to the road. Motion made by Stephen Day to have the ET organize movement and updating of the sign. Seconded by Bridget Laflin. Motion passed.

ii. Need to update the minister's contract

f. Executive Team Report—ET membership

g. Personnel Task Force Report

i. Working on revising Employee Handbook.

ii. Working on updating job descriptions.

h. Policy Governance Task Force Report— Will present a revised and updated document in June. The revised document will be sent to the BoT for review.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. Appointment of three SMSC

members. Members appointed: Valerie Howells, Joe Masonick and Doug Pratt.

b. The Mission/Vision/Covenant (MVC) Task Force made decisions about the Mission/Vision/Covenant. They will start with the covenant and are looking to define the process.

i. MVC will be examining samples of covenants.

ii. To develop communication guidelines, the congregation needs an implicit covenant in place by fall.

iii. Stephen (chair), Elizabeth and Debbie will work on this task.

1. Krista has access to training materials for developing Vision and Mission.

2. Need to work on establishing a timeline.

c. Conflict Resolution Policy Review to be reviewed in June.

d. Communication Guidelines – Stephen

e. Review Trustee of the Day/ Readers' Calendar

V. NEW BUSINESS

a. Determine BoT month-by-month schedule

VI. BOARD HUDDLE AND SHARING OF APPRECIATIVE WORDS

Meeting adjourned at 9:00.

Faithfully submitted,
— **Tim Davis**, Secretary

Ways to Get in Touch

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*three miles west of
Randall Rd.*

Our Closing Circle

attr. to Louis Bourgeois, pub. 1551

Let peace en - cir - cle all the world; Let all on earth walk hand in hand.

A liv-ing bond of fel - low - ship; A voice of love in ev - ery land.



The Unitarian Universalist

Church of Elgin

P. O. Box 1032 • Elgin, IL 60121

