

# Unichord

AUGUST 2014



THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF ELGIN

## Settled Ministry Search Committee Wants YOU

Just think about it. Right now, at this very moment, as you read this article, our new settled minister is writing his weekly sermon or visiting with members of her congregation or studying for that final on social justice or any number of other activities. Unfortunately, I can't see quite clearly enough to identify the person more specifically but that's going to happen in the very near future.

To that end of obtaining a new minister for UUCE, the Settled Minister Search Committee has commenced its work. As you know, the members of the Search Committee were elected by the congregation at the Annual Meeting and chosen by the Board of Trustees. To kick off, all seven members – Lydia Larrabee, Valerie Howells, Susan Anderson, Diana March, Doug Pratt, Joe Masonick and I - participated in an all-day retreat on June 28th to get to know each other better and to clarify both our mission and our roles. Somehow, when I was out of the room, I was elected Chair. Seriously, I'm honored to lead the group and look forward to the opportunity to chat with you in this forum monthly to keep you apprised of our progress. We also have begun meeting on a weekly basis to ensure that we do everything we possibly can to describe, attract and retain the best fit for a minister for our church.

That's where you come in. If you thought selecting a Search Committee completed your responsibilities in this process, are you in for a rude surprise! We need you

more than ever. There is no more important choice that we as a church will be making than the call of a new settled minister. Since the process is a lot like on-line dating, it is absolutely critical that the Search Committee pursues the right candidates for our church so we have to know clearly what kind of church the congregation wants to be and what characteristics the next minister must possess to meet our collective expectations. And, while we probably cannot meet each and every one, it is crucial that we come as close as possible. To that end, the Search Committee will be sponsoring a survey of the congregation and some focus groups to ascertain our needs and wishes. It will offer every member of the congregation a chance to weigh in our future ministry. Since a lot of the process is, by necessity, confidential, this will be your individual opportunity to tell what you want to see in UUCE for the next several years.

I can see many of you are already rolling your eyes. Another survey! More focus groups! Come on already! Yes, we are aware of the demands on your time already made by the Interim Minister Search Committee, the Transition Team and the new Covenant task force along with your regular Church jobs. And, we're still asking for your time. Plus, I tell you in advance, it is not something you can just dash off. The survey will take

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# Lise's Letter



I'm writing this article from my home in Oregon, where I've been for about the last 10 days and have about 4 more to go. It's been a combination time of bitter sweetness,

exhaustion, with a little bit of fun thrown in. Why? I'm getting ready to move my family to Illinois and/or college. In other words, we're cleaning out the house where we have lived for the last 10 years, deciding what we want to keep with us and what to let go, saying goodbye to friends and family (for now), giving the walls a fresh coat of paint for the subsequent inhabitants, and getting ready for our next adventure--the great unknown. Yet another transition in my family's life. Sound a little familiar?

As I take a break from the packing to write this, and look around, I think it's safe to say we have entered the chaos stage. It's that time when you are ending something, but you haven't quite made it into the new beginning—the inbetween time of uncertainty when the past is still achingly comfortable or familiar and you can't quite imagine what that life developing out of the new beginning will even look like. As I've had some good days and some not so good days during this process I'm also reminded that when I take care of myself (exercise, sleep, read, eat well, reflect), things invariably go better, even during the most trying situations. Unfortunately, in the busyness of everything involved in this transition, it can be easy to forget the self-care, or simply push it aside as not important enough. That way lies disaster however.

Another tricky thing about transitions is that they don't always progress in a truly linear process. Like grief, there are ups and downs to transitions. One day it may seem like everything is going well, the chaos is subsiding, the path is becoming clear, and then something hits us from the side. All the more reason to step back (or sideways?), take a deep breath, and rest or try something different for a little while. That's why I also think it's important to have trust in the universe and remember what Julian of Norwich is credited with saying, "All shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well."

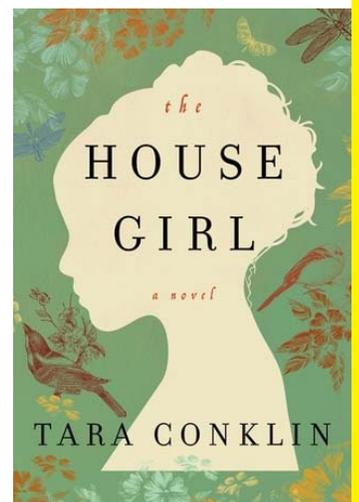
Now, I think it's time for a bike ride to take me far and away from the dust and chaos—at least for a little while. May we all find and make time for bike rides in the midst of our transitions.

Love,  
—Lise

Reverend Lise Adams Sherry,  
Interim Minister

## Books Are In The House

The Afternoon Book Group will meet at 12:30 on Monday, August 25, at the home of Andrea Budasi to discuss "[The House Girl](#)" by Tara Conklin. Contact [Alice Macy](#).



# A Month of Sundays

## AUGUST

8/3: A Little Laughter Would Be Good  
In the busyness of our lives, let's make sure we take some time to just be and enjoy. Service led by Reverend Lise Adams Sherry.

8/10: Is Sin Still Alive, Well and/or Necessary?  
This topic was requested for a sermon sold by Lise in the service auction. Service led by Reverend Lise Adams Sherry.

8/17: Breathe  
Telling better stories with reason and faith. Service led by Jason Engel.

8/24: Are We Spiritual or Religious? Does It Matter?

There seems to be a trend towards having a spiritual life rather than a religious one. What does this mean to UUs and how we relate to the world around us? Service led by Reverend Lise Adams Sherry.

8/31: The Parable of a Garden Seed  
How to break out of your comfort zone. Service led by Jennifer Engel.

*Services begin at 9:45*

## Covenant Update



As a part of our interim period, we have begun the process of reviewing our congregation's covenant, mission, and vision.

The first step in the journey is the creation of our covenant (or the updating of our current covenant).

Our covenant will express what we hope and expect of ourselves and each other in our relationships (both with other members and with the church as a whole). It is not a list of rules, but rather, promises we make to each other. Over the course of the last month, we have held small group discussions to list the promises we'd like to make to each other as well as beginning the process of writing some possible covenant statements.

Additional opportunities for input in the ultimate document will be available in the coming months. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to any of us on

the Covenant/Mission/Vision Task Force: **Stephen Day, Elizabeth Closson, Jason Engel, Debbie Caruso, Andrea Budasi, Elizabeth Olson, or Rev. Lise.**



**All Church Clean-Up Is August 16**

**From 9:00 to 1:00, join in reconnecting with friends as we care for our beautiful building. Arrive when you can, stay as long as you can.**

# Lifespan Religious Exploration and Education

**Kathy's Summer Leave:** I will be out of the office from July 9-August 13. Sunday morning programs will continue. Check your newsletter and email for updates on what we'll be doing.

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.

Here is what's happening this month in Religious Exploration and Education:

August 3	TBA
August 10	"Improv"
August 17	TBA
August 24	"Sundae Sunday"
August 31	No REE

In Faith,  
—**Kathy Underwood**  
Director of Religious  
Exploration and Education

## Picture This

One of the items on the UUCE Aesthetics Team's to-do list has been, for years, to document the paintings, prints, quilts and sculptures that beautify our building. On July 10, the goal of the group was to record who



**An Aesthetics Team subgroup—made up of Henny DuBois, Dotty Carringi and Sandy James—recently spent several hours on finding, assessing, measuring, recording and photographing UUCE artwork in storage and on the walls.**

donated each piece of artwork (along with its title, artist name, size, condition, medium and value, if known), show art that's been hidden, and recycle any items that are damaged or otherwise no longer usable.

"Some of the artwork has water damage or cracked glass. So, we need to decide what to do with those pieces," says Henny DuBois. Church members will soon have a chance to claim any art that is marked for recycling or for sale.

The group recorded 35 pieces of art mostly from the third floor storage closet and second floor walls. Still to be documented is the artwork on the first floor, and perhaps a second inventory will be taken of the permanent art, like the stained glass windows, historical photos and original UUCE furniture.

An inventory spreadsheet, which includes a thumbnail photo of each item, is available to members and eventually can be accessed through the Church computer system.

# President's Reflections



Grief. This may sound like an odd topic for the President of the Board to choose, so let me give you some background.

The Transition Team offered a session, led by Elise Wall, to allow us to discuss our experience with grief as we lost Dan Brosier, our previous minister, to retirement. I decided to attend. I didn't think I needed to have any help with this, but I wondered what others were thinking and feeling, something I thought I should know as a leader of our congregation. I am aware that people deal with loss in various ways and for longer or shorter periods of time. This makes it very difficult to know how to provide ways for each individual to think through the changes they face. And some folks honestly don't feel the need to do anything at all.

Well, a funny thing happened. I learned that I AM sad, not only about the fact that Dan is no longer an active part of our congregation, but also sad about all the "secondary losses," the other things that have changed. I am frustrated that we seem to ALWAYS be changing EVERYTHING. I know this is not true, but I grieve some of the sense of familiarity that is not with me now. I am sad at not seeing some folks who used to be present every week. I miss some of the 'old ways,' even as I celebrate the 'new ways' of doing things. I know other people are having similar thoughts, because I heard them at our session with Elise. I am also aware still others share these thoughts too, but chose not to attend the meeting for various reasons. I wish I knew how to ease their grieving.

Another concept surfaced during this experience. It reminds me of the time of a funeral, when there are many ritual

things to do: family and friends gather, there is a ceremony of some kind, people send flowers, make donations, eat meals together, reminisce. When everyone goes back to their regular routine and all the obligations have been met, there is a huge letdown, an empty space. It is then that real grieving begins. Before then people are kept busy with the ritual activity. I think right now our congregation, and especially the leadership: Board of Trustees, Transition Team and Search Committee, are busy going through the tasks we are called to do to get us through the immediate aftermath of losing Dan: assessing ourselves and finding a settled minister. I think that after the new minister comes, we are going to have that empty space and need to do a second stage of grieving. Right now we are so busy with the work, we may not be giving ourselves time to do that, but it is important that we allow it to happen, as we need to, when we have time.

I hope this makes sense to you. Please talk with me or contact me otherwise if you have thoughts to share. I would love to hear from you.

—Elizabeth Closson  
President,  
UUCE Board of Trustees



# SMSC Wants YOU

*continued from page 1*

approximately 45 minutes to complete and you can't save it and go back to where you left off. It will be more efficient to cumulate answers in the on-line survey, so, if you can take it that way, we'd appreciate it; but there will also be hard copy surveys for those of you who wish to participate in that manner. Ultimately, I don't care how you participate, just that you do participate. Unless there is a substantial percentage of the membership contributing, the Search Committee runs a serious risk of devoting a lot of time recruiting the wrong minister. So, before we commence the search, let's define what we're searching for. The stakes could not be higher so, for the next several weeks, you'll be hearing about surveys and focus groups which we'll kick off when everyone

returns for the fall (again to try to achieve the largest participation possible). Because of the timetable for the process, I can promise we won't solicit any further information from you after this initial blitz so please give us your opinion. We will collate the information into an expression of the church's collective viewpoint of the attributes of the next person to lead our ministry.

— **Dan Hislip**, Chair  
Settled Minister Search Committee



# Uncle Dan Wants

# YOU

# to fill out another survey

# Help is Desperately Needed!



The All People's Inter-Faith Pantry really needs your donations! This summer the number of people being served is double the number served last summer.

The Pantry desperately needs cereal. They also need juice, cans of pork and beans, canned spaghetti, toilet paper and face soap.

Bring your contributions on our Pantry Sunday, August 3, or any Sunday.

## August Calendar

### **Worship Services**

Sundays at 9:45

### **Afternoon Book Group**

August 25 at 12:30—offsite

### **All-Church Clean up**

August 16 from 9:00—1:00

### **Board of Trustees Meeting**

August 20 at 7:00

**please check church calendar**

### **Buddhists**

Thursdays at 7:00

### **Executive Team**

August 13 at 11:00

### **Finance Committee**

August 13 at 7:00

### **Search Committee**

August 6, 20, and 27 at 7:00

### **Solar Social**

August 23 in Fellowship Hall

All day

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

## All Church Clean- Up Is August 16

Please mark your calendars for the "All Church Clean Up" on Saturday August 16th! This is an annual opportunity to reconnect with friends and care for our beautiful building. Come when you can and stay as long as you can. The work party starts at 9:00 and lasts until 1:00.



# Get Up and Grow!

On June 22, more than 20 congregants came together to talk about growth in our church. The conversation was facilitated by the Transition Team. Rev. Lise reminded us about the various kinds of growth:

Four Types of Growth for a Church:

1. Numerical—increasing the number of members
2. Maturation—growing our hearts and minds
3. Institutional—aligning systems to be more efficient
4. Community Outreach—building relationships with our larger community

We used this information to create a [Polarity Map](#), shown on page 9. The map is basically a list of positives and negatives that might happen if we grow, or if we don't grow. We focused on numerical growth, but we recognized the maturational growth might be the best place to put our energy as it would result in numerical growth. We have each pole labeled on the horizontal and the vertical axis. We summarized the ideas here so you could see the concept. What we discovered is we want all the positives to come to fruition and to avoid the negatives. We know we

can't balance all the positives without dipping down into some of those negative possibilities. The Polarity Map helps us identify what it looks like to be on either the positive or negative side.

The group also had many great ideas to support growth in our community and also maintain the community we already have. These ideas are strategies we can implement to keep ourselves in the positive and catch ourselves before we fall too far into the negative. That is why the arrows are there swirling in a figure eight pattern to show how as we grow and gain some of those positives we may have some concerns we need to deal with but we will recognize those and move up to the positives again and

so on as the cycle is never ending. The Polarity Map gives us a way to think about growth that is not an "either, or" perspective but a "both, and" perspective.

So now what? We have lots going on here at UUCE so the Transition Team shared the notes and ideas with the Board of Trustees and the Settled Minister Search Committee. Specific ideas can be built into a variety of committees and efforts. We encourage all members to take responsibility for thinking about growth in each of our efforts and activities.

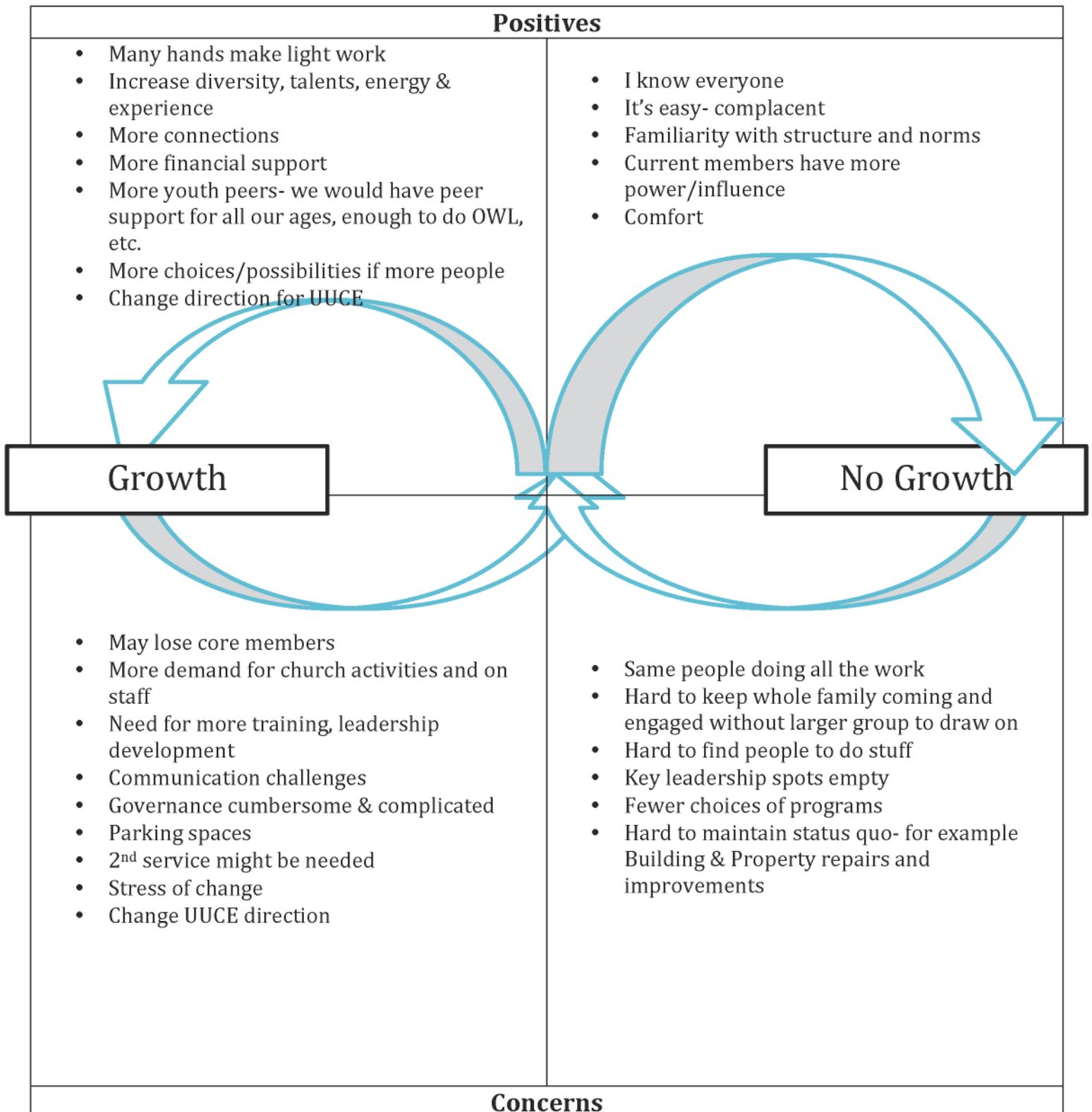
—Your Transition Team,  
[Ann Kremer](#), [Elizabeth Olson](#), [Kathy Hislip](#),  
[Michelle Sweeney](#),  
and [Mike Moutrie](#)

## Pledge Income



# Things That Might Happen If the Church Grows ... or Doesn't

## Polarity Map



# UUCE to Host Interfaith Solar Social

On Saturday, August 23, the Unitarian Universalist Church of Elgin is partnering with three groups to host an Interfaith Solar Social. The event will take place at the church. UUCE will be joined by the Illinois Solar Energy Association ([www.illinoisolar.org](http://www.illinoisolar.org)), Faith in Place ([www.faithinplace.org](http://www.faithinplace.org)), and high school students from the Math and Science Academy program of District U-46. The students are engaged in promoting renewable energy and combating climate change.

From 10:00--12:00, presenters will provide an overview of the state of solar industry in Illinois, and share hands-on experience with installation of PV solar systems on faith community buildings.

Installing PV solar systems is one of the most effective ways for individuals and small groups of people, such as those in the faith community, to take actionable steps to combat climate change.

Through a generous donation from a member of the congregation, the Unitarian Universalist Church of Elgin installed a 9.8 KW photovoltaic solar energy system in 2012. Since that time, the PV solar system has generated 33.2 MWh of energy! Every watt of PV-generated electricity means less burning of coal and other fossil fuels that emit carbon dioxide. This means that the church's PV solar system is consistent with the congregation's deep commitment to care

for the earth and creation of a sustainable environment. That same 33.2 MWh of energy saved the church nearly \$3,000 in electricity bills. That the PV solar system saves money for the church may be viewed as bonus, albeit an extremely important bonus.

The cost of PV solar systems remains relatively high and the payback period is many years for states like Illinois where electricity rates have remained relatively low. Electricity prices are increasing, though, so it is becoming increasingly viable to go solar.

**Presentation from 10:00-12:00 followed by refreshments.**



# UUCE Board of Trustees Minutes

June 18, 2014

Members present: Bridget Laflin, David Yaeger, Elizabeth Closson, Jamie Yucuis, Jason Engel, Jun Yoshitani, Krista Flanagan, Mary Knapp, Stephen Day, Tim Davis.

Others attending: Dan Hislip, Doug Pratt, Emmy Lou Belcher, Joe Masonick, Reverend Lise Adams Sherry, Valerie Howells.

Emmy Lou Belcher met with the BoT and the Settled Minister Search Committee starting at 7:00 to review the SMSC process.

BoT Responsibilities:

- Developing compensation package:
  - Different gradients to consider
  - District compensation consultant
  - Contact Reverend Lisa Presley
  - Provide a budget for the SMSC search
- More ministers than there are jobs
- We are considered a well established church. We are considered an entry level church. We will be attractive to a new minister or someone looking for their second church.

## I. OPENING

- a. Centering – Jason
- b. Approval of Agenda
- c. One Minute Check ins

## II. APPROVAL OF MAY 2014 MINUTES

### III. REPORTS

- a. Transition Team Report – discussed recent grief meetings.
- b. Financial/Earmark Funds Report (See also request from Joe on behalf of Green Sanctuary committee)
  - i. “Ghost” accounts are being ignored.
  - ii. Still looking at creating year-to-date budget in Power Church
  - iii. Earmark name changes/Audit – Doing an audit on the Earmarks. Finance Committee will conduct the audit. The intent is to have this ready by September.
  - iv. Name changes will be a part of the audit.
  - v. Need to look at check signers. Krista made a motion to remove Krista Flanagan, Alice Macy and Andrea Schmidlin and add Elizabeth Closson, Davis Yaeger, Jamie Yucuis and Jason Engel as check signers. Seconded by Bridget Laflin effective July 16. Motion passed.
  - vi. Establishment of a timeline to pay off member loan number 2. Will put into next year’s budget.

c. Minister’s Report and Q & A (Also Lise’s Preliminary Fellowship Review due 7/1)

- i. Elizabeth and Tim will work on updating Lise’s contract for her second year.
- ii. Preliminary Fellowship Review
  - a) Separate from the Interim Ministry evaluation.
  - b) Transition Team has done a review. Delegation from BoT. Needs this by July 1, 2014. Elizabeth has an interest in getting input from BoT.
- d. Executive Team Report
- e. Personnel Task Force Report
- f. Policy Governance Task Force Report
- g. Covenant Development Task Force Report – Starting with covenant - rules for how we should behave with each other. Stephen described the next steps for this work.

## IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a. Conflict Resolution Policy Review
- b. Communication Guidelines – Stephen
- c. Trustee of the Day/Readers Calendar up to date?

## V. BOARD HUDDLE AND SHARING OF APPRECIATIVE WORDS

Meeting adjourned at 9:00pm

Respectfully submitted,  
– Tim Davis, Secretary

## Ways to Get in Touch

### WEBSITE

[www.uuce.org](http://www.uuce.org)

### E-MAIL

[minister@uuce.org](mailto:minister@uuce.org)

[administrator@uuce.org](mailto:administrator@uuce.org)

[newsletter@uuce.org](mailto:newsletter@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.*

# Help Is On The Way



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



The Unitarian Universalist

Church of Elgin

P. O. Box 1032 • Elgin, IL 60121

