



The

UNICHORD

January 2007

Unitarian Universalist Church of Elgin

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BOSTON BOUND BABES—HERSTORY.

- Savannah Underwood

For years it has been UUCE's tradition to send the 6 to 8 grade R.E. class to Boston to tour the many UU related sites in Massachusetts's big city—and go whale watching, duck touring, and visit Walden pond!

It's every Middle Schooler's dream to spend a week of fun in a different state without their parents, right? Well, on July 28th, four girls from this year's 6 to 8 class realized this dream. Emily Waldron, Taylor Kremer, Savannah Underwood, and Lenya Schug took a round-trip flight to Boston. And believe me, not a dull hour went past.

Even before the girls landed in Boston, their precious cargo was lost. As much fun as it is to lose your luggage, the Beautiful Boston Babes were not happy. After a long trip to the UU B&B, each one had something to complain about.

At least they got to take a shower, dashing through the rain to dinner that night. As they sat shivering, prospects for Boston did not look bright.

However, the rain let up by the next morning, and the fun began in Salem. After visiting a few Magic Shops, they moved on to the intriguing Witch Trials, an interactive performance that mimics the first Salem Witch Trial. After that, the group headed to Walden Pond, to sit on the beach and wish they had bathing suits. Savannah, however, deciding swimming suits weren't necessary to swim, plunged into the water fully clothed. The cramped car ride home was very soggy, and at 11:00 PM the group was very pleased to receive their luggage.

The next day, a whale-watching tour, a rocky boat ride out into Boston Harbor. Everyone enjoyed the fabulous display of breaching and tail splashing, and were thrilled to see a young whale emerge from the bay a mere ten feet from the boat. As they traipsed off the boat three hours later, each paid for her own airbrush tattoo to mark their memories of that day on their own skin—exciting, right?

An interactive tour around UU sites in Boston and a tour on the duck- half car, half boat, which Savannah got to drive around the bay—the end of the trip, truly came too soon. As the plane headed home, each girl reminisced in her memories of a trip they surely won't forget anytime soon!

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PERMACULTURE POSSIBILITIES

A group is meeting to determine if a week-long permaculture design course will be coming to UUCE in October, 2007. Members of the Green Sanctuary and other interested parties met Dec. 17th with Bill Wilson, founder of Midwest Permaculture, and Wayne Weiseman, an accredited permaculture instructor, to explore possibilities. This initial group of 17 set a meeting for everyone who is interested in exploring this opportunity for Wednesday, January 17, from 7 to 9 p.m. Some of the items for discussion:

Proposed dates — October 28 through November 3, 2007

UUCE would provide classroom space, food service, and extensive PR ahead of time

Tuition in the range of \$1100 - \$1200

UUCE would benefit in several ways:

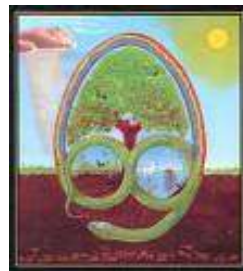
Reaffirmation of the UUCE's leadership role on

environmental relationships and quality of life issues

Permaculture design work for the UUCE grounds by some of the world's leading experts

Fundraiser of \$100 per student, if desired
Deepening our network of kindred spirits: course instructors, students, local organic food sources, and more

Making powerful positive change in the world



Participants will receive top quality instruction from the only two Permaculture Institute (PI) accredited instructors in the United States: Mark Shepard and Wayne Weiseman. Graduates would earn PI certification. Bill Wilson's organization, Midwest Permaculture, will offer post-workshop support through events and networking. It is also highly likely that participants will have an experience of 'community' or 'permanent-culture', the spiritual side of sustainable living. One previous participant said, "This was a very practical, life—giving and life—receiving course, taught by knowledgeable, fun—loving people, who are passionate about making a change." See the slideshow at www.midwestpermaculture.com for more information and inspiration.

The January 17 meeting will focus on these and other questions: Are there enough UUCE personnel who will support the venture? Who will take on (possibly salaried) responsibilities for food service coordination, procurement, cooking, co-ordination with Bill Wilson, PR and other duties? This meeting will be the "go/no-go" decision point; so if you are interested in seeing this happen please attend. Questions? Contact Elizabeth Olson or Donna Askins.

Permaculture is about designing ecological human habitats and food production systems. It is a land use and community building movement which strives for the harmonious integration of human dwellings, microclimate, annual and perennial plants, animals, soils, and water into stable, productive communities. The focus is not on these elements themselves, but rather on the relationships created among them by the way we place them in the landscape. This synergy is further enhanced by mimicking patterns found in nature.



Rev. Dan Brosier

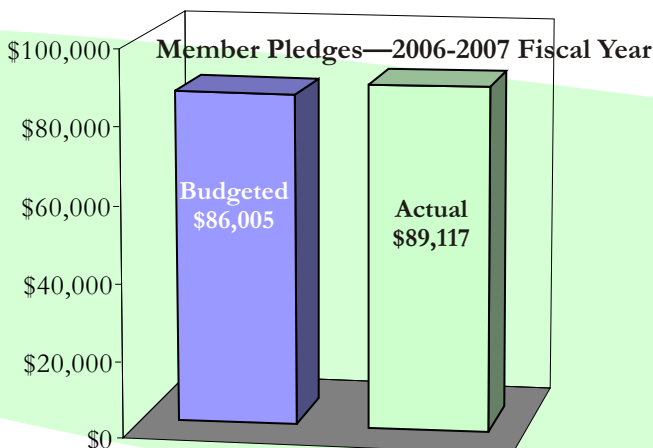
From the Minister

These words come from
the Rev. Richard S. Gilbert

I inhale and exhale in regular rhythm,
An act so common it never occurs to me to pay attention.
And when I do, I am overwhelmed with the wonder of it all.
I eat my food, as I have done for a thousand thousand days,
A practice so frequent I hardly notice
The miraculous million events that happen in my body.
And when I do, I am taken with their singular beauty.

I greet my loved ones, as I have greeted them for years,
A habit that I pass off casually
Until I realize the deep poignancy of greetings and farewells,
How precious they are,
How they touch deeper feeling chords each time.
Perhaps it is middle age, or old age,
Or perhaps sentiment grows in me,
Or perhaps I am awakening to life
In ways transcending my usual semi-awake state of being.

The poignancy of living in these days
Penetrates me, burrows deep into psyche or soul or spirit--
I know not what.
I only know that I feel things more deeply with the passing years,
That the common things of life become uncommon,
That the ordinary becomes extraordinary,
That the habitual becomes sacred.
Bittersweet is the poignancy of living in these days.
I awaken myself,
And bow down in deep gratitude.



The 2006-2007 budget calls for \$128,750 in pledges. Eight months' worth of this figure is \$86,005. Questions?
Contact your Finance Coordinator, Alice Macy.

(847)888-0668

Month of Sundays

7 - Inviting The New Year Into Our Lives.

Most cultures, if not all, celebrate the New Year. For some this is the holiest day of the year. In this service we will ritually invite into our lives the spirit of the New Year. Also during this service we will hold a Child Welcoming Ceremony when we acknowledge the new infants in our community.
Service led by the Rev. Dan Brosier.

14 - One Small Step Towards Justice: Knowing The History

Many of us who are concerned about racial justice wonder what we can do. One potent step is to learn a fuller history of this Nation and the contributions of African Americans. Also during this service we will hold a New Members' Ceremony to officially welcome our newest members.
Service led by the Rev. Dan Brosier.

21 - Voices of Color

Racism is nurtured by distance and the prejudice this allows. Encountering people as human beings begins to close the gap. Listening to people dismantles the assumptions.
Service led by the Rev. Dan Brosier.

28 - This I Believe

Our greatest resource is one another. However we find our way, the UUCE community supports our search through the multitude of experiences members and friends share with one another. This service allows three members to share their beliefs with us.
Service led by Elizabeth Olson.

Services 10:45 A.M.
Fellowship & Coffee Following
Childcare Available

January



Wednesday 3rd

NO Barn Bells

6:00 PM - Eat and Meet

7:00 PM - Committee on the Ministry - Dan's Office

7:00 PM - Spiritual Inquiry Covenant Group - 302

Friday 5th

9:15 AM - Executive Team Meeting

6:00 PM - Women Cooking For Women

Sunday 7th

9:00 AM Unichords

9:30 AM Worship Committee

9:30 AM - Adult Sunday School - 302

- Spiral Dynamics - Anne Ward - Bob Sandidge

10:45 - Worship Service

Inviting The New Year Into Our Lives

-Rev. Dan Brosier

- Coffee & Fellowship Following

12:30 PM - Prairie Fest 2006 Review - 301

Wednesday 10th

6:00 PM - Eat and Meet

7:00 PM - Finance Committee - Dan's Office

7:00 PM - APPLE - Room 301

Sunday 14th

NO Unichords

9:30 AM - Adult Sunday School - 302

The Bible - Dan Hislip

10:45 - Worship Service - Rev. Dan Brosier

One Small Step Towards Justice:

Knowing The History

New Members Ceremony

- Coffee & Fellowship Following

Monday 15th - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Wednesday 17th

6:00 PM - Eat and Meet

7:00 PM - Women's Crafting & Scrapbooking

7:00 PM - Permaculture Workshop Meeting - 302

Friday 19th

7:00 PM Executive Team Meeting

Sunday 21th

NO Unichords

9:30 AM - Adult Sunday School - 302

The Bible - Dan Hislip

10:45 - Worship Service - Voices of Color

- Rev. Dan Brosier

- Coffee & Fellowship Following

12:00 PM - Green Sanctuary - 301

12:30 PM - New U Class - 302

February Unichord News Due

Wednesday 24th

6:00 PM - Eat and Meet

7:00 PM Women's Spirituality - off site

Thursday 25th

7:00 PM - Board Meeting

Friday 26th

7:00 PM - Book Group - off site

Sunday 28th

9:30 AM - Adult Sunday School - 302

- Forum - Andrea Schmidlin

10:45 - Worship Service - This I Believe

- Elizabeth Olson

- Coffee & Fellowship Following

Wednesday 31st

6:00 PM - Eat and Meet

News & Announcements



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 and this church in particular. The program is facilitated by Pat Pecho and Dan Brosier, and the next session will begin on Sunday, January 14 at 12:30 following the service. The second session will be on January 21 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 in the Fellowship Hall. If you would like childcare please indicate so on the sign-up sheet by January 7. If you have any questions call Dan Brosier at the church.

~

PSST- Listen, do you want to know a secret?

Do you promise not to tell? Don't start singing. Yes, I know the Beatles did that. But I'm serious. The Spiritual Inquiry Covenant Group is opening its membership to interested members of the congregation who would like to explore an exciting new DVD entitled, "The Secret." So you can either learn the secret or don't complain to me when you're out of the loop, still looking for the secret. The group will commence this new avenue of inquiry



at its first meeting on the first Wednesday of the New Year (January 3rd) at the Church after the Eat & Meet dinner. So, how about it? Is your interest piqued? Come and join a great group of spiritual seekers in an exciting new approach. How do I know it's a great group? I'm in it, aren't I? Who am I? That's another secret! (Didn't we start here?)

~

Lessons of Loss Workshop

In this four week workshop participants will create a safe place to discuss losses both large and small. We will explore the feelings common to all loss. Some themes include: loss of a loved one, moving, loss of job, loss of youth, and loss of social or professional position. Together we can deepen our connections to one another by sharing common experiences and feelings. Workshop dates are Sundays, February 18th and 25th, March 4th and 11th at 12:30-2:30. Sign up on the clip board in Fellowship Hall or by contacting Elise C. Wall.

~

Volunteer For Meals On Wheels

Meals on Wheels needs volunteers who can share their time one week out of every quarter for 1 1/2 hours a day, to bring meals to homebound, appreciative people. If interested, please call Sherm Ovelmen. This is a good way to expand our community service.

Women Cooking For Women

The next "Women Cooking For Women" dinner will be held on **Friday, Jan. 5th, 2006.** Women, 13 and older, are invited, asked to bring a dish to share for the potluck, and to donate money to help support "Project Linus". The suggested donations are \$5 if you bring a dish to share, and \$10 if you don't.

This month is our "Night of Passion". One woman presents a cause that she is passionate about to the group. Pat Pecho will be presenting "Project Linus", along with a member of that organization. "Project Linus" involves making blankets for children and teens experiencing difficulties in their lives. We will learn about the project, and then we will have some volunteers teach (willing) participants how to knit or crochet. We'll discuss the possibility of making a group blanket to donate to the cause. If you have any knitting needles, crochet hooks, or yarn you would like to donate, please bring them along!

Doors open at 6:00 p.m. Food should be ready to be served by 6:30 p.m. Friends and family members are welcome to attend. There is no sign-up or membership required. Just come! See Laurie Kiesewetter or Andrea Schmidlin if you have questions.

Keep your calendar free the first Friday of each month for WCFW dinners:

- Fri., Feb. 2nd: United Nations Population Fund:
focusing on fistula operations
- Fri., March 2nd: Invisible Children
- Fri., April 6th: Sisters for Science
- Fri., May 4th: Joining Book Group in reading and discussing, Three Cups of Tea by, Mortenson & Relin

HOPE YOU'LL JOIN US!

~

New Members Welcome January 14th

Our next welcoming ceremony for new members is Sunday, January 14. Membership in UUCE is open to all persons sixteen years or over who agree with the purpose of this church, which is the study and practice of religion in freedom and fellowship. Membership is also a statement of commitment to the principles which underlie our denomination, to the growth of our movement, to the health and well being of this church community, and to the individual's search for truth. Members agree to contribute to the church through participation, authenticity and concern in relations with other members, and financial support. Voting members must make an annual contribution of not less than \$100. To become a member please talk to our minister Dan Brosier and sign the membership book. If you would like more information on membership please see the minister or Pat Pecho, membership chair.



Kathy Underwood
Director of
Religious Education

Religious Education

Now that the winter holidays are past us, it is time to jump into the New Year with more possibilities!

Our biggest program this month is the Fine Arts Program, which is an intersession the Religious Education Council plans between the two semesters of classes. This year's program is January 21 and 28. As you can tell by the title, it is an opportunity for our young people to learn about some of the arts they might not get exposed to in other areas of their lives, as well as to provide an opportunity for adults to interact with them. Since we have a lot of newer members now, our dilemma this year is finding out which adults have such interests and hobbies. So if you have any experience with any type of art, please let me know. Some possibilities are: painting, knitting/crocheting, embroidery, printing, origami, cooking, calligraphy, dance, drama, music, metalwork, woodwork, jewelry, using recyclable materials in art, paper mache, photography, cartooning, puppetry, etc.

The commitment will depend on the type of art—some may be just one Sunday, some may need two Sundays. On February 4, we will present our efforts during the worship service, which will be coordinated by the Council and myself. So, let us know if you have a talent you'd like to share, and don't be shy!

Also this month, we start our Mystery Friends program, which you can read more about elsewhere in this newsletter.

On January 28, the Youth Group will go sledding at the Halberstadt home after the service. In case of "inclement" weather (in this case, no snow), then they will see a movie or go bowling. Check your orders of service and emails for updates.

Last, but certainly not least, the Religious Education Council is recruiting teachers to fill spots for the spring semester, which begins February 11. It's certainly going to be a busy and exciting month!

In Faith,
Kathy Underwood

Prairie Fest Review

After the service on January 7 in room 301 all interested parties are invited to meet to review last year's Prairie Fest and discuss the future of the event.

Religious Education

January 7

Preschool:	Chalice Cookies
K-2 nd :	More About Babies & Us
3 rd -5 th :	Clara Barton
6 th -8 th :	Congregational Survey #1
High School:	Buddhism

January 14

Preschool:	Helping Others
K-2 nd :	Meet Befana
3 rd -5 th :	A Take Apart Party
6 th -8 th :	Congregational Survey #2
High School:	Buddhism

January 21

Fine Art Program Begins

January 28

Fine Art Program Continues

Adult Sunday School Schedule

First Sunday of each month Bob Sandidge and Anne Ward present Spiral Dynamics— January 7th we take a closer look at the 5th and 6th spirals. All are invited to come and learn what it is and how it applies to your life.

The second and third Sundays of each month Dan Hislip facilitates Bible Study. Bring your Bible.

On the fourth and on the occasional fifth Sunday of each month Andrea Schmidlin facilitates a discussion Forum.

Do join this lively group any Sunday at 9:30 am on the 3rd floor.

New Members

Since our last Unichord **Greg Ward, Jill Lonegra, and Tony Dean** have signed the membership book. We joyfully welcome them into our community.

Who Am I?



The people will waken and listen to hear
The hurrying hoof-beats of that steed,
And the midnight message of this famous
UU from 1776

(answer will appear in the next Unichord)
December Who Am I is James Pierpont

Green Corner

MAKE YOUR OWN COFFEE EVERY DAY is one of the simple, sustainable changes for the New Year suggested by the Illinois Chapter of the Sierra Club. "Think through the impacts--from the bean to the trash can--of buying three non-organic Starbucks coffees in a week in paper cups with lids and java jackets.

"First, think about the source of the beans. If you're not buying organic, shade-grown coffee, you are killing birds and other inhabitants of tropical areas all over the world. Shade-grown coffee plantations incorporate big shade trees which shelter and feed thousands of creatures. The coffee crop and nature thrive side-by-side. Many shade-grown coffee plantations are small, use less mechanization and sustain farm families and rural communities.

"If you make coffee at home and bring it with you in a thermos, you control the bean, the roast, the water, the quantity--and you save time, money and trash." You can purchase your fairly traded, organic, shade-grown coffee right here at UUCE. Both regular and decaf are available, as beans or drip grind, for \$7.00-\$8.00 for 12 oz. Organic tea, cocoa, and chocolate are also available. Thanks to Mary Alice Masonick for managing this program for the benefit of UUCE member and friends and the environment.

BOOK GROUP

You are warmly invited to join the members of the Book Group at any of their upcoming meetings, which begin at 7:00 p.m

- December 29 - We will each review a favorite book. Pat Pecho's
- January 26 - "The Memory Keeper's Daughter" Kim Edwards at home of Marilyn Hendry.
- February 23 - "Dreams From My Father" by Barack Obama. TBA.

Executive Team

The Executive Team: Dan Brosier, Myla Brinker, Kathy Underwood, Andrea Schmidlin, Kathy Hislip, Alice Macy, will email notice if a Sunday service needs to be canceled due to weather conditions. Please check your e-mail on questionable Sundays to see if the service has been canceled. If you do not have email, feel free to call any member of the Executive Team.

Sharing From Our Pantry To Inter-Faith

Your generous donations to the All People's Inter-Faith Pantry are really appreciated. Again this year, a thank you to the Scarf Fairy for all those hand-knitted scarves she donated. The Pantry continues to need breakfast items along with powdered milk and soymilk. Canned meats are also needed. Bring your donations on our Pantry Sunday, January 7, but, as always, your contributions are welcome any time during the month.

News & Announcements

UUCE 2007 Canvass

Gratitude was the theme of a recent Sunday service. In reflecting on the idea of gratitude and thankfulness, I realize that I am very thankful to be a member of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Elgin. By participating in our church we are able to attend meaningful services in which we hear inspiring sermons and great music. We can find support for our own spiritual journeys and engage in satisfying relationships with others. We are offered well-rounded religious education for our children and opportunities for involvement in important issues. And we are all very fortunate to attend a church in a rural setting with a Labyrinth, a Meditation Garden, and our beautiful Prairie Cathedral surrounded by a restored prairie. But like any business or household, our church incurs expenses. To raise the necessary financial resources to pay for these expenses, we hold an annual canvass in which we ask the members and friends of the UUCE to make a financial pledge to help fund the various programs provided by our church.



Our canvass theme this year, "Tending the Flame, Funding Our Faith", encourages us to support our church generously. The canvass begins on Canvass Sunday, March 4, 2007, with a service and luncheon and then continues for two weeks. During this time, you will be asked by a canvasser in a face-to-face meeting, a telephone conversation, or a letter to pledge a financial contribution to our church for the next year. If you are new to our church or have not yet made a pledge, we hope that you will consider making a financial commitment to UUCE. And we are counting on experienced members and friends to continue to make a significant contribution to help fund our church for another year. Look for more information about the canvass in the coming months.

Canvass Committee members are Paul Anderson, Tim Davis, Bob Jackson, Alice Macy, Joe Masonick, Linda Rodda, Carol Schoengart, and Rusty Winchel. Please feel free to contact us with questions or comments.





Lydia Larrabee
Board President

President's Reflections

"I had been focused all day on meetings and e-mail and various details. I was running late to meet a friend for dinner, and I happened to run into someone else I knew in the parking lot. "Look!" she said. "Isn't the sky beautiful?" I stopped short, and looked up.

It was, indeed, beautiful.

I might not have seen it.

Thank goodness for those times when we are surprised out of our narrow visions. Thank goodness for those people around us who remind us that there is a different perspective. I might not have seen that sky."

This was the beginning of a column by the Rev. Emily Gage, our district board president. She went on to talk about how the district board meets with congregational leaders all around the district when they have their meetings. She reflects on how "we can get caught up in our own congregational practices, and forget that there are other ways to do things." She notes that "every time we meet another Unitarian Universalist, we remember that we are not alone, that there are different perspectives, and that we are enriched by one another."

The surprise, community and enrichment that Rev. Gage points out can benefit us as a church; indeed, some may say it is why we come to church. In the early part of 2007, we will use these elements to join together to create a new mission statement for UUCE, one that captures who we are and what effect we want to have. We will also create a new vision statement to lead us into the future for the next five years. It is our opportunity as an entire congregation to look up from the details of our church life to see what great possibilities live in our association with each other and in all of our perspectives as members of this UU church.

I hope that each and every one of you will participate in the process of this creation. We need your ideas, your commitment, your feedback and your vision to really bring us all together to create a mission and vision that we live out and aspire to. What do you want to be doing as a church in five years? How do you want to express UUism in our community and world? By looking at the trees, the forest and the sky, we can discover and renew our reason for being.

I wish for you a warm and wonderful new year.

Lydia

Kudos to:

Anne and Bob Bedard for coordinating the social action project for the senior citizens, and the many adults and youth who did the work; **Joy Shores** and **Todd Underwood** for chaperoning the 6th -8th grades at the lock-in at the church.



Andrea Schmidin and **Bridget Lucas** for chaperoning the youth at the Spirituality Conference. **Bob** and **Anne Bedard** for coordinating the Soup Kitchen project. **Andrea Schmidlin** and **Donna Askins** for organizing the Alternate Gift Fair. **K-2 RE class** for raising funds for the Katrina relief. **3-5 RE class** for the popcorn sale to raise money for charity.

"I am not interested in weapons, whether words or guns. I want to be part of the rescue team for our tired, overcrowded planet. The rescuers will be those people who help other people to think clearly, and to be honest and open-minded. They will be an antidote to those people who disconnect us. They will de-objectify, rehumanize, and make others more understandable and sympathetic."

- Mary Pipher UU World Contributor

Ways to Get in Touch

Church Office 847.888.0668
Web site www.uuce.org
PodCast uuce.libsyn.com
Schedule an event uuce.org/event-scheduling.html
Newsletter submissions newsletter@uuce.org

Board President:

Lydia Larrabee

Newsletter Editor

Bob Sandidge Newsletter@uuce.org

Deadlines

Order of Service Wednesday PM
UNICHORD NEWS January 21st

January Birthdays

1	Shelby Navadomskis	25	Jeremy Clough
5	Jan Underwood	26	Elise Wall
5	Andrea Budasi	27	Denise Benson
7	Louette Rogers	28	Gretchen Sherrell
12	Dave Segel	29	Paul Anderson
13	Chris Leyba	29	Koby Lesiewicz
14	Karen Olesch	31	Mimi Locknar
16	Heike Spayne		
17	Olivia Leyba		
19	Lenya Schug		



The Unitarian Universalist Church of Elgin

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www.uuce.org

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day | January 15th

We shall overcome. - Jonalu Johnstone

When we can truly celebrate the diversity of contributions and talents offered by all people, we shall overcome hatred and prejudice and oppression.

When we can truly extend our hands to one another in loving acceptance, we shall overcome the past that haunts us now.

Living in peace and freedom, we shall overcome the wrongs that have happened and the debts left unpaid.

Let us join together in that commitment to overcome.

Let us say together, "Amen."



Lighting this chalice, we invoke the presence of Love in our hearts, to share it today among us and then spread it to the world.

Therefore, let nobody feel a stranger in this circle and may all feel welcome.

—the Sociedad Unitaria Universalista de España