

From the Minister

The book I was reading the other day told the story of a particular woman's fight for the freedom to pursue her dreams. The dreams were the same as any man in the society might have, but in the era she lived such aspirations were considered inappropriate or unfit for a woman. In the pursuit of her dreams, each and every day this woman faced cultural resistance and thus pressure to conform.

Now often storytellers will speak of the personal attributes of the individual as the reason they did what they did. Without a doubt this is true to a significant degree—for instance, such individuals were courageous and determined. But what struck me about this story was the attention paid to the importance of the little band of friends and family who supported this person. It appears that this woman's participation in this small community gave her enough support and nurture to go forward even though she was surrounded by a sea of opposing views.

I suspect that this has often been the case with the courageous women and men who have pursued their beliefs in the face of societal opposition. I suspect that part of the resources that allowed them to continue day in and day out was their involvement with a group who shared their aspirations and perspective. Often these groups were small—minuscule compared to the opposition—but they made all the difference.

As I read this I thought about us. I thought about the stands that Unitarian Universalists have taken over the years, many ahead of cultural consensus, and how the support and encouragement of our small communities have allowed courageous UUs to go forward. I think of a few of the issues we face now—the looming war in Iraq, the threats to the environment, and the many examples of intolerance like homophobia and I hope we are such a community for the leaders among us who pursue greater justice, responsibility and freedom. The support we give each other may make all the difference.



Rev. Dan Brosier

TENDING OUR COMMUNITY

In case you haven't noticed, our congregation is growing! Our sanctuary is full most Sunday mornings and teachers' assistants are in place in the RE classrooms. Thirteen new members have signed our membership book since May. Last year we had nine new members over the entire year and we have had record numbers of visitors in 2002-2003.

I was interested in finding out how it feels to be new to our growing congregation. To answer that question, I have been busy interviewing some of our new members and visitors. For the most part, people think of us as friendly. They value the opportunity to think about religion and to form their own beliefs in an open, caring community. They think we are "earthy", "down-to-earth", "a caring community", "a very busy place", and "socially conscious". Other things confuse newcomers. Sometimes they are not sure exactly how to get involved. Our leadership structure is confusing to some. While they find our newsletter and web-site to be very informative, they are not always sure how to get their ideas into action and who to go to for information.

We are responding to what new members are telling us. You may have already noticed the Membership and Hospitality Committee is working even harder at greeting visitors and involving new members and friends in the life of the church. Soon a new visitor card will be introduced that will help us better collect information from visitors and get information out to them about church activities. An upcoming PR/marketing campaign will let the outside and inside community know more about us. And the Strategic Planning Team is hard at work to develop a plan to guide us over the next few years. They will be asking everyone, new and experienced, to help with that planning process. It's an exciting time to be at UUCE! Come and watch us grow. Linda Porter, Community Development and Growth Coordinator.

OUTREACH COORDINATOR

We are currently developing a job description and hiring process for a part-time outreach coordinator for the UUCE. If public relations, creative marketing and spreading the word about our church sound like fun to you, contact Todd Underwood, Linda Porter, Dan Brosier, or Kim Cecil to learn more about this exciting new role.

WHAT IS YOUR VISION?

Dream with us for a while... It's 2010—the church has come a long way. If you close your eyes and think about it, what do you hope you will see?

- What has changed, what has stayed the same?
- Are you attending exciting new programs? If so what are they?
- What are people saying about our church? What are we actively supporting as a congregation?
- What does our church building look like inside and out?
- What are we about at UUCE?

We want to hear about your vision and the vision of all of the members and friends at UUCE. That's why the Strategic Planning Team is sponsoring a church-wide visioning day on March 16 after church from 12:45 to 3:00 p.m. Lunch and child care will be provided.

Please join us as we plan our future. For more information, contact Mitch Kremer, Team Leader.

The Strategic Planning Team: Mitch Kremer, Brianna Bedard, Kim Cecil, Tim Davis, Suzanne Hanjfl, Kathy Hislip, Alice Macy, Linda Porter, Andrea Schmidlin, Kevin Webster.

Dan

The Annual Canvass will be held from March 2 to March 16, when members and friends of UUCE will be contacted and asked to pledge their financial support of the operating budget of the church.

In keeping with our theme, **GIVING, WE GROW**, the 2003 Annual Canvass will kick off with a Garden Party in Fellowship Hall following the Canvass Sunday service on March 2. Another Garden Party will be held on March 9 following the Music Sunday service.

UUCE Calendar February 2003



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 9:00a Canvasser Training
2 9:00a Unichords 9:00a Canvass Com. 9:30a Worship Com. 12:15p PATH Group -Rm 203 12:30p Strategic	3 7:00p Illuminations 7:00p Buddhist Meditation Group -S	4	5 7:00p Com on the Ministry 7:00p PR Comm. 7:15p Barn Bells -203	6 7:00p Tai Chi	7	8 6:30p Service Auction
9 9:00a Unichords -203 9:00a RE Council 9:00a Canvasser Training	10 7:00p Illuminations 7:00p Buddhist Meditation Group -S	11	12 7:00p Church Council 7:15p Barn Bells -203	13 7:00p Tai Chi	14	15 6:00p Circle Suppers
16 9:00a Unichords 9:00a Social Just. 10:00a Barn Bells 12:30p World Religions 6:00p Fireside Chat <i>Newsletter Deadline</i>	17 7:00p Finance Com. -FH 7:00p Illuminations 7:00p Buddhist Meditation Group -S	18	19 7:00p Board of Trustees Meeting -FH 7:15p Barn Bells -203	20 7:00p Tai Chi	21	22 9:00a Quilting Group
23 12:30p Green Sanc.	24 7:00p Illuminations 7:00p Buddhist Meditation Group -S	25	26 7:00p Membership Com. 7:15p Barn Bells -203	27 7:00p Tai Chi	28 7:00p Book Group -O	

Month of Sundays

February

2 Chaos

We all know about chaos in our day to day lives, but did you know that it is one of the most recent revolutions in science. This service attempts to make sense of chaos theory and explain how it might be related to a Unitarian Universalist in Elgin, IL waving her arms up and down. *Service led by the Rev. Dan Brosier.*

9 Sharing Our Thoughts on War and Peace

We seem to be on the verge of a war with Iraq. Is it a colossal injustice, or a necessary action to bring greater peace and security to the world? Where do our principles lead us? What should we do? *Service led by the Rev. Dan Brosier.*

16 In Honor of the Teddy Bear

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the birth of the Teddy Bear. These stuffed animals have meant a lot to many, many people through the years. In this service we look at some of the Teddy Bear's history, and their lasting presence in our lives. All are invited to bring their Teddy Bears. See announcement at right for more information about special Teddy Bear events. *Service led by the Rev. Dan Brosier.*

23 Seventh Annual Fine Arts Sunday

The culmination of a three-week Religious Education program, this service will showcase artwork from our children and youth that is centered around Worldwide Peace. *Service led by Kathy Underwood.*

SERVICES BEGIN AT 10:45am
WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU

A TOUCH OF GLASS (continued from page 1)

on Randall Road, and the Cusimanos had them reinstalled in our present church. Margot, a member of our congregation since 1972, explains that the four panels were created by the Chicago artist, Larry Zgoda, and represent the four seasons. The four panels hang at the front of the sanctuary, two on each side, and a small dedication to Tim Cusimano lies below the windows on the left side.



This 1982 Courier News photo was taken when two newly-reconstructed stained glass windows were dedicated. Left to right are Norm Wilkinson, Connie Muirhead and Rev. Bill Metzger.

The last part of our church's stained glass collection originated in the old church built in 1891 at the corner of DuPage and Villa in downtown Elgin. In 1977 a fire ravaged the interior of the church, which was subsequently sold in 1979. In 1978 the congregation purchased property on Randall Road which included a house which became our meeting house. Two stained glass windows were salvaged from the old church and were reconstructed to the original design by Norm Wilkinson and Connie Muirhead, an artist and former member of the church. The windows were installed and dedicated on Easter Sunday, 1982, and now hang on either side of the front doors of our present church. The companion piece which now hangs above the front doors was designed and created by Norm as a gift to the church and was installed at the Randall Road site on January 22, 1983.

We thank Norm Wilkinson and the Cusimano family for their generosity and for adding to the beauty of our church. You truly do give our church "a touch of glass."



BRING YOUR TEDDY BEAR TO CHURCH

On February 16 we will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Teddy Bear. Following Dan's special Teddy Bear Sunday service, you are invited to gather in Fellowship Hall to display your Teddy Bears. Prizes will be awarded for the biggest and smallest bears, the oldest, the best dressed, and the most traveled.

Announcements

CIRCLE OF LIFE

We are saddened by the news of the death of Dan Laux's father. We hold Chris and Dan in our thoughts.

NEW MEMBERS

We are glad to welcome into membership Jennifer and Dave Briggs; and Debbie and Eric Prebys; and Sam Franzmann.

WORLD RELIGIONS SERIES - PROTESTANTISM

This series focuses on six of the world's religions. Each session is composed of viewing a video on the religion followed by a discussion. Sessions begin at 12:30 PM on the designated Sunday. Participants are encouraged to bring food for a potluck lunch. The next session on February 16 will be on Protestantism—a faith that has greatly impacted this nation. Please sign up on the designated clipboard in the Fellowship Hall.

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 pm.

February 28 - "John Adams" by David McCullough.

At the home of Dotty Carrangi.

March 28 - "The Lovely Bones".

At the home of Denise Benson.

April 25 - "Life of Pi" by Yann Martel.

At the home of Diana March.

May 30 - "The Woman in White" by Wilkie Collins.

At the home of Shirley Wolin.

EMAIL COMMUNICATION

One of the most effective ways to send and receive communications within our church community is to use email. There are two group lists available for members and friends to communicate church-wide:

uus@uuce.org is designated as the "church business" list.

Messages sent to this address should only contain information directly relating to church business.

uuce@yahoogroups.com is the general discussion list where members and friends can post their own opinions and comments.

If you're interested in joining one or both of these email lists, please contact Kevin Webster at mailmonitor@uuce.org.

UUCE INITIATES FIRST BLOOD DRIVE

On Sunday, March 9th, the UUCE will hold its first Blood Drive for the Heartland Blood Center. The drive will last from 9:00 am - 1:00 pm and hopes to provide over 35 pints of blood for local hospitals and medical facilities. Donors will be assessed for eligibility and donate blood on site. Heartland will be bringing equipment to allow up to six individuals to donate blood every 20 minutes from 9:00 am - 1:00 p.m. They will continue through the Music Sunday Service, and attempts will be made to make music audible at the donation site. If you are interested in donating, please sign up in advance for a slot on the clipboard at church or by e-mailing Kim Cecil.

WORLD RELIGIONS CALENDARS AND T-SHIRTS

If you recently purchased a calendar or t-shirt, please see Kathy Underwood.

Kudos to:

Thanks to **Donna Askins, Betsi Waldron, Mike Moutrie, Rusty Winchel,** and **Cheren Waller** for creating the chalice artwork in the front circle window; **Debbie & Eric Prebys,** **Andrea Schmidlin,** and **Jim & Linda Porter** for organizing and hosting the church New Year's Eve Party.



SECRET FRIENDS

Secret Friends will culminate on February 9. All participants are asked to come to the service that day to meet their secret friend and celebrate!

WISH LIST

Combination microwave/toaster oven (maximum cost \$500). See Linda Porter or Cheren Waller for details.

CANNED SPAGHETTI, KIDNEY BEANS AND RICE

The Food Pantry needs any type of canned spaghetti, kidney beans and rice. Bring your donations of any non-perishable food or toiletries for the All Peoples Inter-Faith Pantry on Pantry Sunday, February 2, or on any Sunday during the month. I had to make a second trip to the Food Pantry in January to deposit all those mid-month donations. Thank you for your generous donations to the Food Pantry in January. Keep up the good work!

FIRESIDE CHAT ON FEBRUARY 16

Are you new to our church? Would you welcome a chance to hear a bit more about the Unitarian Universalist Church of Elgin (UUCE) in a relaxed atmosphere? At Fireside Chats, you are invited to gather with other new friends of our church, the minister and a few church members over refreshments. These informal events offer opportunities for those gathered to share a bit about themselves and to chat about the history of our UUCE, as well as Unitarian Universalism.

The next Fireside Chat will be held at the church on Sunday, February 16 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Childcare will be provided. Sign-up sheets for this event will be located on the information table and in the back of the Fellowship Hall. For more information, contact Linda Porter.

BUDDHIST MEDITATION

Don't be put off by the name. You needn't be a Buddhist or an experienced meditator to participate in the group that meets in the sanctuary Monday evenings from 7:00 to no later than 9:00pm. Anyone high school age or older is welcome. Inspired by Zen master, author and peace advocate, Thich Nhat Hanh, the practice format includes focusing on the breath during three 20 minute rounds of sitting and walking meditation followed by shared reading and discussion time. For more information please contact Diana March.

Religious Education

This month promises to be a busy one in Religious Education. All children and youth from preschool through 8th grade will be participating in our 7th annual fine arts program. This year, our theme will be based on our principle of “working for a peaceful, fair, and free world”, and will also involve this year’s overall theme of world religions. Our leaders will be Chris Davis, Sarah Davis and Donna Brooks- preschool; Lisa Kerpoe and Cheren Waller- K-2nd; Mila Brinker and Todd Underwood- 3rd-5th; and Janeen Vanko and Katherine Brosier- 6th-8th. All of the classes’ efforts will be presented at the service on February 23, so please come and support our children and youth.



Kathy Underwood, DRE

Secret Friends is also underway. This is a fun program where adults and older youth are secretly matched with a younger child. For two weeks, the adults and youth send cards, emails (with parent's permission), or phone calls with clues to their identity. It's then up to the child to figure out who the secret friend is. On February 9, each child meets his/her secret friend and receives a gift bag. There is no cost for this, and we ask that adults and older youth do not purchase gifts for their secret friend. We want to make this a fun time for all, and to avoid hurting children's feelings if some get gifts and others do not. The best gift you can give is to be an active participant and come for the fun on February 9!

On February 15, all high school youth are invited to kick-off the formation of a new youth group at the church with a lock-in. (This is a chaperoned overnight.) While the details are still being worked out, the beginning activities will be centered on developing their own mission statement and deciding what it is they want to offer in the group. Youth who may not want to stay overnight are still encouraged to come for the evening's activities. See Marjie Askins or Amy Schmidlin for more details.

Kathy Underwood
Director of Religious Education



Who Am I?

This vital member of our congregation is a native Elginita and her timely birth kept her father from being drafted into the Vietnam War (he was next on the list).

(answer will appear in the next Unichord)
January's *Who Am I* was Linda Porter.

IT'S AUCTION TIME (continued from page 1)

butcher-block table and chair donated by Pat Nuccio. Other early contributions for the live auction include: A Trivial Pursuit party, a set of children's books, and novel set (all from Tim and Chris Davis), four cane chairs (made to order) donated by Philip Webster; two hours of tech support offered by Jim Bottino and Louette Rogers, and The Fox Valley Folk Festival Picnic offered by Doug Pratt and Betsy Olson. The premier early offered item is a one-week vacation in the Dutch West Indies (valued at \$1,125) given by Jim Burnidge and Roberta Nauman.

This short list is limited due to the Unichord deadline, but an updated list of auction items can be found on the UUCE website (www.uuce.org) — check it out.

We look forward to a full house for the auction on Saturday night. Steve Askins will serve as Master of Ceremony and the team of Auctioneers has been assembled. For those who can't attend, it is still possible to bid! You can pick items from the catalog and its addenda, find someone who will be attending to bid for you (you will still need to get a paddle number for proxy bidding), and give them specific directions on how to bid for you.

And don't forget it isn't too late to make another contribution to the auction. We will still accept donations right up to auction

BECOMING A FROG MONITOR

If being outdoors with a friend or partner on a spring evening, listening to the sounds of the awakening natural world, appeals to you, then you may want to become a frog monitor.

It's easy, enjoyable, and provides valuable data to scientists. Amphibians are good indicators of environmental quality because they are sensitive to toxins and changes.

For the past three years, volunteer monitors throughout the Chicago region have collected previously unavailable information by participating in the Chicago Wilderness Calling Frog Survey. Volunteers choose a wetland to visit during the spring to listen for frogs and toads. The species are amazingly easy to distinguish by their breeding calls alone! This is a fun activity to do with a partner.

We invite you to join us at the training session on Saturday, February 15, from 9AM-12PM at Pottawatomie Park in St. Charles. This is for Kane County wetlands. If you wish to monitor in another county, Mary Alice Masonick can let you know where and when their training will take place.

5 QUESTIONS FOR NEW MEMBER BOB JACKSON

- a. **Where do you live?**
Bartlett.
- b. **Do you have any hobbies or special talents?**
Volunteering, tennis, biking.
- c. **What is your favorite cartoon character?**
Big Bird.
- d. **Where is your favorite vacation spot or your “dream vacation”?**
Warm beaches.
- e. **Please share a little known fact about yourself.**
Later.....



Kim's Korner

This church is what anchors me in this community. Rusty and I had to contemplate moving away for employment reasons, knowing we could hold our families close from anywhere. But this congregation gives us a home, a place to belong and be needed and nurtured. For that, we stay and we will give to the best of our abilities—to make UUCE stand out among churches as a place of harmony, integrity, and justice.



Kim Cecil
Board President

We find ourselves at a turning point in our church's life. Many of the members are poised and ready to help move the church forward by supporting the new systems, commitments, and traditions that being a mid-sized church requires. Some members are cautiously supportive of the idea of growth—not wanting to lose any of the family feel of their church home. A few resist and hang on to the church that has nurtured them, wishing for it not to change or grow. I can empathize with all. I call on each of us to be full members and participate in the waves of change that have taken on a life of their own. By being a full member, I mean that we should each take to heart the theme of this year's canvass and consider the ways that "Giving, We Grow".

Growth does not mean simply more people; it means more quality of life, more opportunities, and more challenges. This congregation needs each person to stand up and be a part—to challenge yourself to be a vital part of the body of the church. We give of our time—sharing our gifts and talents in volunteer capacities. We give of our energy—sending good wishes, emotional support, and healing thoughts to those who are in need. We give of our resources—offering a portion of our income to support the financial needs of the church, paying for salaries, physical surroundings, and programming changes that benefit our members.

In this time of economic strain, one might be inclined to re-assess and reduce her or his pledge. I appeal to you to do only half of that if you are in a position to do so. Reassess and increase your investment in that entity that holds the most essential of commitments: faith, community, family. Join together and build this congregation into the thriving, energy-giving, learning organization that offers each of us more than we give. Only with each of us challenging ourselves and possibly sacrificing something else from our lives does that type of change and growth happen. Some of us have already made as many sacrifices as we can, and each gift is important. We need brave pledges to make brave changes. I appreciate \$5 a month from a senior on a small pension as much as thousands from someone who has plenty to spare. I believe that the return on our investment of time, energy and resources will be felt in the life and the vitality of the organization. Let's push ourselves, take some chances, and grow into our vision for the future.

Peace,

Kim

GREEN CAR BUYING

Automobiles are a major source of air pollution and greenhouse gases in this nation. It is widely recognized that the pollution and green house gases produced by our automobiles are taking a terrible toll on our climate, the environment and human health.

One of the things we can do to reduce the negative impacts of automobile use is to buy cars that create fewer harmful emissions. Most of us are aware that this means we should buy cars that get high mileage, but there is another characteristic to look for as well. This other characteristic is its emission rating. Look for vehicles that are rated as either a low emission vehicle (LEV), an ultra low emission vehicle (ULEV), or super ultra low (SULEV), or (eventually) a zero emission (ZEV). The LEV, ULEV, SULEV and ZEV ratings refer to those vehicles that meet certain emission standards. Buying a vehicle that is a LEV/ULEV/ SULEV and gets high mileage is the best way to fight air pollution and greenhouse gases short of not driving. Information on which cars are greenest can be obtained at www.greencars.com or www.epa.gov/autoemissions/. Information about the LEV program can be found at <http://www.cleanaircounts.org/factsheets/FS%20PDF/LEV%20factsheetfinal.pdf>. Come take a ride in a SULEV after the service on February 9.

Ways to Get in Touch

Church Office	847-888-0668
Web site	www.uuce.org
Newsletter Submissions	newsletter@uuce.org

Board President

Kim Cecil

Newsletter Editor:

Todd Underwood

Deadlines

Order of Service	Thursday PM
Unichord	February 16

February Birthdays

- 1 Dotty Carringi
- 2 Lydia Larabee
- 10 Anne Branstrator
- 14 Bob Jones
- 17 Bud Geister
- 17 Kathy Hamill
- 22 Sandy James
- 23 Savannah Underwood
- 24 Ayla Halberstadt
- 26 Greg Schmidlin
- 26 Jack Thrasher
- 27 Kelly Wall



The Unitarian Universalist Church of Elgin

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

ROLLER SKATING PARTY!

Please join the Social Justice Committee and the kids at the Larkin Center Creekside Home for an afternoon of roller skating fun! Meet us, or travel with us, to the Funway Roller Skating Rink in Batavia on February 16 at 1:30. Admission is \$4.50, and skate rental is \$2 (\$3 for the inline and \$3.50 for speed skates). Admission is free for non-skaters! This should be a fun time to skate away winter blues, and we hope to see you there! If you would like more information, please contact Kevin Webster, or any member of the Social Justice Committee.



Hardy New Year's Eve revelers gathered around a backyard bonfire at the church just before midnight.



Kim Cecil and Cheren Waller officially welcomed a wonderful group of new members into our church community on January 12.