

From the Minister

The thought has come to me over the years that driving is a spiritual practice. I know that sounds a bit absurd, and when I say this I don't mean that it is a spiritual practice in the sense of being relaxing and rejuvenating—that it gives us a sense of being in touch with the greater whole. Rather I mean the experience can teach us something about ourselves and what is going on inside of us—essential elements to a spiritual practice.

I suppose anything we do can be turned into a spiritual practice, but how we drive our cars certainly does indicate something about our inner world. I know that is true when I drive, and it sure seems like it is true when I watch other people.

For instance, I know that I am feeling pretty non-anxious when I find myself relaxing into my drive. At these times I drive the speed limit or a little under. I give myself plenty of space in terms of the cars in front of me. When turning a corner and entering traffic I enter it respectfully and don't push the limits. I accelerate slowly. I tend to let other drivers go ahead of me.

On the other hand when I am tense and anxious about things I tend to speed, follow other cars too closely, get angry at other drivers, accelerate and brake quickly, and enter traffic a little too abruptly. All these are signs about my internal dynamics, and they bear directly on my sense of well being, and peace, and my ability to be a compassionate presence. Paying attention to such mundane activities is really essential to any sort of spiritual development, and the opportunities are right before us. We don't have to go to a mountaintop to deepen our inner life. All we have to do is climb into our Chryslers, BMWs, Hondas, or Fords; go for a drive; and listen.



Rev. Dan Brosier

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Dan".

Part-time Opportunity: **Community Outreach & Growth Coordinator**

A newly-created position at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Elgin. The primary role of this person will be to work with church committees and staff to attract new people to the church while enhancing the church's image and visibility in the surrounding community. For more information contact minister@uuce.org, or call 847-888-0668.

TENDING OUR COMMUNITY

From Pastoral to Program

On March 16, about one-third of the members and friends of UUCE gathered to provide input to the Strategic Planning Team on the future of our church. Two of the top priorities identified by this group had to do with growth. This speaks, I believe, to the awareness of those present that our church has been growing, and a commitment on the part of many to continued growth. But what does such growth mean to a church community?

Right now our church has around 135 members and approximately 20 friends who attend regularly and make regular contributions to the church. This, plus our high average Sunday attendance, puts us at the upper range of a size category known in church literature as the Pastoral Church. A Pastoral Church operates as a community led by a central figure, the minister. In such a church, most of the members know each other and new members/friends are easily brought into the larger community. As a church begins to move away from the Pastoral size toward the next size category, the Program Church (over 150), the pressures of trying to make meaningful connections with others increase. To put it simply everyone does not know everyone else. While growth will certainly enhance our church in many ways, it can also lead to fear of losing the close-knit community that was once a small Pastoral Church.

One aspect of becoming a Program Church which can help maintain and strengthen the bonds of community is the formation of programs based upon Small Groups. "Forming Small Groups is the single most important building block of the Program Church. It represents an important shift of attitude and emphasis that offers opportunities to enhance church life and the expression of each person's individual gifts."* We have such groups in our church life now. In many cases informal small groups were created as our members felt a need for more meaningful relationships, or for sharing of common interests. In a Program Church, church sponsored small group opportunities are offered as programs in which all members can elect to participate. Existing examples of such programs are Covenant Groups and the Book Group. "This form of programming allows each person to explore important values in a safe and trusting environment."

You will be seeing an increase in small group opportunities in the near future. Making these new programs work will require that church members and friends participate in, help plan and support small group activities, while extending invitations to new folks to join in as well. Watch this space for more about Program Churches next month.

Linda Porter

Community Development Coordinator

**Quotes from Reverend Bill Haney, UU Church of Columbia, Missouri*

GAINING RECOGNITION (cont. from page 1)

Our congregation will soon be asked to vote on the next step, which is to apply for GS accreditation. Once the UUCE is recognized as a Green Sanctuary, the committee will continue to help the church community and its members live more gently on the Earth. Current members of the GS committee are Jack Berry, Dan Brosier, Alice Macy, Joe and Mary Alice Masonick, Pat Nuccio, and Dave Segel.

UUCE Calendar

May

2003



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3 3:00p Oxfam Benefit Concert
4 9:00a Unichords 9:00a RE Council 9:30a Worship Com. 12:00pNew Member Ceremony 12:15pAnnual Meeting	5 7:00pBuddhist Meditation Group -S	6 11:30a Care Team	7 7:00p Com on the Ministry 7:00p P.R. Com.	8	9	10
11 9:00a Unichords 9:00a Green Sanctuary <i>Mothers Day</i>	12 7:00pBuddhist Meditation Group -S	13	14 7:00p Church Council	15	16	17
18 9:00a Social Just. Com. 9:00a Unichords 12:30p Birthday Potluck <i>Newsletter Deadline</i>	19 7:00pFinance Com. -FH 7:00pBuddhist Meditation Group -S	20	21 7:00p Board of Trustees Meeting -FH	22	23	24 9:00a Landscape & Grounds Work Party
25	26 7:00pBuddhist Meditation Group -S <i>Memorial Day</i>	27 7:00p Membership Com.	28	29	30 7:00p Book Group -O	31 7:30p Talent Show

Month of Sundays

May

4 Ordinary Miracles

Too often religion is a reaction to fear. What it needs to focus on more often is celebrating the ordinary miracles that surround us. During this service we will hold a new members' welcoming ceremony. Following the service we will hold our Annual Congregational Meeting. Service led by the Rev. Dan Brosier.

11 Nurturing Life

On this Mother's Day we celebrate more than biology—we celebrate the gifts of nurture that enriched and sustained our lives. Service led by the Rev. Dan Brosier.

18 Let Us Pray

A service of words and music intended to speak of what is important in life. During the service we will recognize those youth who are making the transition from Jr. to Sr. High School. Service led by the Rev. Dan Brosier.

25 War Letters

Traditionally Memorial Day is a day to remember and honor those who have died in our nation's wars. In this service we honor those who have faced the horrors of war by telling some of their stories through the letters they wrote to loved ones.

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

SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE NEWS

Held a fun egg-coloring party with six of the girls at the Creekside home. Thanks to Colleen C. for boiling them all up. Kevin, Henny and Dan Riordan have worked a lot on our Web page and it's up and running at www.uuce.org/socialjustice! You'll want to check it out for coming events and links to topics of special interest.

Next regular meeting date is Sunday, May 18, before church (we try for 9:00). We really like to see new people and hear new ideas! *Helen Maxwell.*



The "big girls" collected plenty of candy in the UUCE Easter Sunday Egg Hunt.

COMMITTEE ON THE MINISTRY

The Committee on the Ministry's (COM) mission, as stated in the UUCE Users Guide is, "To assist the church in the practice of its mission/covenant." This would include the ministry of our minister Dan Brosier and our Director of Religious Education (DRE), Kathy Underwood. However, COM also looks at ministry in a broader perspective because all members of the UUCE have the potential to play a role in the ministry of our church community.

The COM is also charged with promoting and developing leadership development activities for the UUCE. Most of the work completed by the committee this year focused on developing programs or materials to assist other committees. It is also the responsibility of COM to periodically assess the needs of the congregation, the board of trustees, the church committees, and our ministerial staff.

This year's members, Susan Anderson, Dan Brosier, Kim Cecil, Tim Davis, Betsy Olson, and Kathy Underwood, are working to assist the church in the development of a more responsive and effective ministry. The characteristics of a COM member would include the following: invested in the community, impartial, diplomatic, able to maintain confidentiality, and understands when to speak and listen.

These are the activities that we have been working on during the 2002-2003 church year:

- Discussed the concept of Shared or Gift-Based Ministry, and facilitated the creation of the Care Team.
- Created the Guidelines for Committee Chairpersons resource.
- Organized and planned the Fall Leadership Retreat which was facilitated by Angela Merkert from the Central Midwest District. During the retreat, we focused on how to best develop our Vision and Mission statements. This led to the creation of the Strategic Planning Team.
- Worked with a task force created by the Board of Trustees to create a Personnel Committee. Currently the COM is responsible for recommending the salary, expenses and benefit packages for the minister and DRE. When the Personnel Committee is formally created, this will be one of the responsibilities for this new committee.

Announcements

CIRCLE OF LIFE

We are saddened by the news of the death of Rusty Winchel's father and the death of Mitch Kremer's father. We hold Rusty and Mitch and their families in our thoughts.

NEW MEMBER

We are glad to welcome into membership Pat Segel.

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.

May 30 - "The Woman in White" by Wilkie Collins
At the home of Shirley Wolin.

June 27 - "The Secret Life of Bees" by Sue Monk Kidd.
At the home of Henny DuBois.

SUMMER SERVICE IDEAS

The Worship Committee has begun work on the upcoming summer services. These will occur on June 22, July 13, 27, August 10 and 24. If you have any ideas about a service you would like to see during this time please contact Dan Brosier.

WISH LIST

\$28 Church Hymnals—Funds to purchase a small microwave convection oven for the kitchen—a Britta water filter or Britta pitchers.

MAY DAY BIRTHDAY

Mark your calendars now to join the Religious Education Council at our annual birthday potluck. This year, our birthday celebration will be held on May 18 at 12:30pm. We will picnic outside, weather permitting. Bring a dish or cake to share, and any food you would like grilled. Sign up at the clipboard table in Fellowship Hall. Celebrate spring in its full glory with us!

EVALUATIONS

The Religious Education Council will be conducting evaluations of the religious education program this month. Look for the details in the orders of service in the next few weeks.

LANDSCAPE AND GROUNDS WORK PARTY

The first Landscape and Grounds Work Party of 2003 will be held on May 24 from 9:00 a.m. to noon. We will be planting and transplanting about 100 seedlings into the Prairie and surrounding areas. Bring a shovel, hand trowel, and gloves. Tools will also be provided if you don't have any on hand. Hope to see you there. All ages are invited to participate.

UUCE TALENT SHOW

There WILL be a talent show at UUCE, and the date is Saturday, May 31, at 7:30. So sign up now to share your talents, or at least plan to be in the audience. Already on the program are such popular UUCE headliners as Jennifer and Dave Briggs, Mike Moutrie, and Doug Pratt, and debut performances by the Masonick Duo and the Silver Foxes.

To sign up, look for the clipboard in Fellowship Hall, or call director Paul Anderson. Child care will be provided. Snacks and soft drinks will be available during intermission; you're welcome to bring your own beverage.

Kudos to:

Phil Webster for building the brochure holders for the Earth Wisdom labyrinth;
Mila Brinker for coordinating the Easter Egg Hunt; our outgoing Board members: **Todd Underwood, Carl Deitrick, Esther Hermann, Lisa Kerpoe**; our outgoing R.E. Council members: **Katherine Brosier** and **Donna Brooks**.



THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

Thank you for all your donations for the Food Pantry last month. I was pleasantly overwhelmed by all the donations. It was more work delivering all these items to the Food Pantry, but I'm not complaining. The Food Pantry asked for donations of crackers, pork and beans, and kidney beans this month. Please bring your donations of non-perishable food items or toiletries for the All Peoples Inter-Faith Pantry on Pantry Sunday, May 4th, or on any Sunday during the month. *Henny DuBois*.



Mary Shelden, Marjorie Askins, and Steve Askins gave a rousing rendition of "Here Comes the Sun" on Easter morning.

Benefit Concert for Humanitarian Aid to Iraq Irish/Scottish Music Featuring:

Babette Colburn and Jaime Eller on Flute and Violin.
Genelle Wine on Guitar with Vocals.

When: Saturday May 3rd, 3:00pm

Where: Unitarian Universalist Church of Elgin

There will be a small reception held afterwards.

For more information call Jaime Eller at 847-695-2788.

Minimum donation of \$5.00

All donation proceeds will go to Oxfam (www.oxfam.org)

Religious Education



Once again, the last full month of the regular church year is upon us! With the closing of the year, we have just a few events coming up.

On May 18, we will be recognizing our eighth grade youth in a Coming of Age ceremony. Following the service that morning, the Religious Education Council is holding our annual birthday potluck. This year, our theme is "May Day Birthday". Hopefully the weather will bless us with some warmth and sunshine to celebrate in. Look for more details in this newsletter, as well as in the order of service.

On June 1, we will be recognizing our five high school graduates during this last service in the sanctuary. In addition, we will be honoring all who have helped our religious education program run this past year. So please come and be recognized!

Here's what each of the classes is doing:

- May 4 Preschool: People Help Me
 K-2nd: God Wants Fairness
 3rd-5th: Japanese Children's Day
 6th-8th: Experiencing Buddhism
 OWL: Sexual Decisions
 YRUU: Relating news articles to UU principles
- May 11 Preschool: People Teach Me
 K-2nd: Love Your Neighbor
 3rd-5th: Mother's Day Peace
 6th-8th: Rissho Kosei-Kai
 OWL: Sexually Transmitted Diseases-Facts
 YRUU: Relating news articles to UU principles
- May 18 Preschool: People Know Me
 K-2nd: The Spirit Power of God is in Each One of Us
 3rd-5th: Maulid al Nabi (Mohammed's birthday)
 6th-8th: Visit a Buddhist Temple
 OWL: Sexually Transmitted Diseases- Prevention
 YRUU: Relating news articles to UU principles
- May 25 Preschool: Prairie planting
 K-2nd: Prairie planting
 3rd-5th: Prairie planting
 6th-8th: Prairie planting
 OWL: Prairie planting
 YRUU: Brunch
- June 1 Preschool: I Can Celebrate
 K-2nd: Our Stories About God
 3rd-5th: UU Day
 6th-8th: Conclusions of World Religions Class
 OWL: Attend regular RE classes
 YRUU: End of Year Wrap-Up

Kathy Underwood
Director of Religious Education

"ELGIN'S BIGGEST SALE" JUNE 13-15

This year's rummage sale will be held Thursday, June 12, through Saturday, June 14, with set-up taking place during the three days prior to the sale. Please mark the dates on your calendar.

Donations can be brought to the church now, as long as they are clearly marked "for rummage sale" and placed on the third floor. We ask that you check your items to make sure they are in saleable condition before you bring them to the church. We will take all contributions; however, we ask that you limit clothing to items which are in excellent condition. Some of the more popular items include furniture, housewares, tools, sporting goods and working electronics. This year, Helen Maxwell will be organizing the "UUniques Boutique", which will include better-quality items and interesting finds. Please look around your house for things which might be included in the Boutique.

In order to make the sale as successful as possible, we will be looking for volunteers to help with sorting, pricing and placing signs prior to the sale, as well as people to work during and after the sale. Please be thinking about how you can help and watch for the sign-up sheet at church, or contact me directly to volunteer. *Andrea Schmidlin*.

A Visit with New Members Dave & Jennifer Briggs



Where do you live? South Elgin

Do you have any hobbies or special talents? *Dave:* I can almost do an impression of Ted Baxter from the Mary Tyler Moore Show. I also write songs and love racquetball. *Jennifer:* I can make a mean lasagna and I love to sing.

What is your favorite cartoon character? *Dave:* Ross from the sitcom "Friends." But if you mean

actual cartoon, then it's Fred Flintstone. What can I say? He "rocks!" *Jennifer:* I'm getting rather attached to the dog Blue from Blues Clues, since my younger kids love that show!

Where is your favorite vacation spot or your "dream vacation"? *Dave:* Rome, Italy. *Jennifer:* The French Riviera... someday.

Please share a little known fact about yourself. *Dave:* I had a song published in Nashville in 1995. *Jennifer:* I've been singing in a Greek wedding band for 10 years (and I'm not even Greek!)



Who Am I?

This famous Unitarian has championed many causes and charities. Prior to a severe 1995 injury, his career in the performing arts shared equal importance to him with fighting for the arts, environment, children, and human rights. He now devotes even more time to activism.

(answer will appear in the next Unichord)

April's Who Am I was Florence Nightingale.

Kim's Korner

The Board of Trustees is basically a policy-making body for the UUCE, and the church certainly got its money's worth this month as the Board passed three policies: 1) A Procurement Policy recommended by the Green Sanctuary Committee to guide our purchases, 2) a Reusables Policy to guide our use of items that can be reused over single-use items like paper plates, etc., and 3) a Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Policy to protect our young people from harm.



Kim Cecil
Board President

You'll hear more about the first two at the Annual Meeting on May 4th, but the third might go unnoticed by the congregation. For this reason I bring it to your attention.

The policy was initiated by Dan at the prompting of our insurance carrier. Dan Brosier, Kathy Underwood, Laurie Kiesewetter and Andrea Schmidlin worked hard on the draft brought before the Board for review last fall. It became clear immediately that the implications of this policy made it complicated and so the Board spent many evenings in separate meetings to discuss the policy and we will have completed our work with Draft 10 of the policy. It is the result of much discussion and attention to detail, and I would have to say I'm proud of the final product. Many members of the Board worked to respectfully share disagreement, seek possible solutions, and understand one another through the process. It is as a tribute to their work that I share a BRIEF summary of the 6-page policy:

- defines child sexual abuse and inappropriate sexual behavior with children
- clarifies procedures for screening RE and youth activity volunteers
- provides guidelines for supervising youth
- specifies reporting procedures and notes possible signs of abuse
- details a procedure to follow in case of a report, to protect the children from any (further) harm, the church from liability, and the alleged perpetrator from further accusations or trouble.
- outlines restrictions available/required for alleged perpetrators who wish remain a part of our community

Of course, anyone is welcome to read the policy in its entirety. (Ask and I'll send you a copy.) The implications are that we will be fully compliant with our policy by the end of the next church year. This means we will need to begin the process of screening our current volunteers and become accustomed to having two adults with groups of children at all times. If you're interested in helping us to implement these safety measures for our children, please feel free to contact me.

If you're feeling generous, express your appreciation to our Board Members who worked hard on this policy: Lisa Kerpoe*, Carl Deitrick*, Todd Underwood*, Norm Wilkinson*, Esther Hermann*, Joe Masonick, and Mila Brinker. (* means departing or departed Board Member). Thank you.

Peace,
Kim

GREEN CORNER

Keep Cool and Beat Global Warming with a Ceiling Fan

Ceiling fans were once the air conditioners of choice in the US. In 1960, only 15 percent of US homes were air-conditioned. But today air conditioners account for 1/6 of the nation's electricity consumption each year. On a hot summer day they gobble up to 40% of the electricity produced!

Creating enough electricity to meet US demand is already causing enormous environmental pressures. Electricity generation from fossil fuels is responsible for 29% of the nation's greenhouse gases and 70% of its acid rain. More than half of the electricity produced comes from burning coal, the dirtiest fossil fuel, responsible for many of the country's worst pollution problems.

In contrast, the ceiling fan is not only quiet and inexpensive, but also very energy efficient. Even at maximum speed, a ceiling fan uses less than 10% as much electricity as a medium-sized air conditioner. Running a fan 12 hours per day costs about \$1.50 per month, compared to \$25 a month for an air conditioner.

Fans cool by creating light breezes that evaporate moisture from the skin. Non-circulating air feels up to nine degrees warmer than the gentle air circulation from a ceiling fan. So on a hot day, you can set an air conditioner's thermostat nine degrees higher with a fan operating and cut energy use by a third!

The beauty of a ceiling fan is that consumers can do their bit for the environment without sacrificing comfort, while saving money. So if you have ceiling fans in your home, turn them on this summer. And if you don't, consider having one installed.

(Adapted from John C. Ryan, Northwest Environment Watch)

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	May 18

May Birthdays

1 Katherine Webster	20 Kyle Underwood
5 Dave Underwood	20 Babette Colburn
7 Rhonda Merritt	20 Moter Deng
7 Keith Ginn	22 Frieda Anderson
9 Joe Masonick	22 Dennis Schwank
9 Sarah Davis	24 Carol Shoengart
10 Zachary Anderson	24 Chris Merritt
14 Gretl Kramer	26 Jim Tischke
14 Paul Masonick	27 Aaron Briggs
16 Esther Hermann	28 Ryan Kiesewetter
18 Eddy Lund	29 Emily Waldron



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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Standing Out at Spring Ring 2003



Elgin Community College was the home of this year's Spring Ring on April 5. Many handbell choirs from throughout the Midwest participated in the phenomenal event, and our own Unichords were the only choir to perform a solo number. The evening was a musical masterpiece!