



## From the Minister

*The following was written by Elizabeth Tarbox. I found it in one of several collections of meditations written by UUs and published by Skinner House.*

When I was a child my stepmother gave me and my sister each a lima bean. She showed us how to dampen some blotting paper and line a jam jar with it, and how to place the bean carefully between the blotting paper and the jar. She told us to stand the jars on the windowsill in our bedroom and keep the blotting paper wet, and watch to see what would happen.

A little later I took my bean out and polished it up with a bit of furniture polish. It was all shiny now and smelled much better than my sister's bean.

In a few days my sister's bean swelled and a strong white root pushed out of the bottom of the bean. My bean just sat there. A week later my sister's bean sprouted a green shoot that forced its way up and out of the top of the jar. My bean did nothing, but began to look wrinkly. In another week my sister's jar was full of roots and shoots and the bean was ready to be planted. My bean shriveled up and fell to the bottom of the jar and I threw it away.

How often have I covered things with furniture polish to make them shiny, to make them smell better? How often in my life have I cared more about the way things looked, and how they smelled, rather than how they really were? I spent half a lifetime covering my feelings with the emotional equivalent of furniture polish, thinking that if I looked good and smelled good the ache inside would go away.

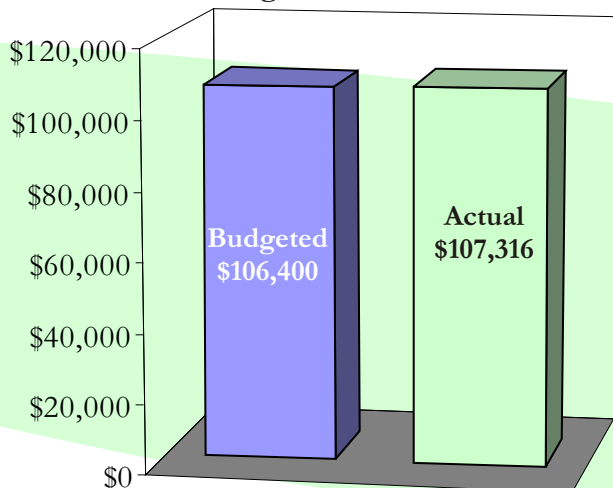
But spirits are not like beans, thank god. They may shrivel with neglect, but as long as life persists there is the chance to wash off the polish and redeem the growing thing inside.



Rev. Dan Brosier

*Dan*

### Member Pledges—2004-05 Fiscal Year



Congratulations! Questions? Contact your treasurer, Alice Macy, at [treasurer@uuce.org](mailto:treasurer@uuce.org).

2

(847)888-0668

## FROM YOUR CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR

### Landscaping and Grounds Work Party

Please join the Landscape and Grounds Team on Saturday, May 21 from 9:00 am to 12 noon for a planting and pulling (weeds that is) work party. We will be planting prairie and wetland plants purchased from Kane DuPage Conservation District and pulling weeds in the garden beds and prairie. Bring your favorite shovel, weeder and gloves. Some tools are also available at the church.

### New Member Ceremony

The 2005 Spring New Member Ceremony will be held on May 15 during the worship service. A reception will be held following the service. If you have been thinking about joining our church this would be a wonderful time to sign the membership book.

Membership in the Unitarian Universalist Church of Elgin 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 growth of the 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. An annual contribution of record of not less than \$50.00 is required to maintain voting member status. The act of becoming a member is accomplished through signing our Membership Book. See the Minister, Dan Brosier, or Membership Chair, Linda Porter, for more information about becoming a member.

### Reserving a Meeting Room at UUCE

This has been a busy year at UUCE. We are delighted to see new programs starting at a wonderful rate. More programs mean more opportunities for all of us to grow in spirit and community. This also means that we sometimes have multiple requests for space. If your group is planning on a meeting or activity at church, please let the church office know as soon as possible (847-888-0668 or [office@uuce.org](mailto:office@uuce.org)) so your activity can be listed on the church calendar. In order for an event to be listed on the Unichord calendar, you must schedule your meeting by the third Sunday of each month. We are also asking that you complete a room reservation form which can be found in the office. The form will help ensure that you have a room reserved for your meeting. It will also help us better meet the needs of everyone when more than one group is meeting at the church on a given day or evening. Finally, if your meeting is cancelled or the date/time is changed, please notify the office as soon as possible.

Linda Porter, Church Administrator, [administrator@uuce.org](mailto:administrator@uuce.org)

# UUCE Calendar

## May

# 2005



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1</b> 9:00a Unichords 9:30a Worship Com. -102 9:30a Adult RE 11:00a Adopt-a-Highway 12:30a Annual Meeting	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> 6:45p Barn Bells 1 7:00p COM -102 7:15p Barn Bells 2	<b>5</b> 6:30p SSTF 7:00p Covenant Group	<b>6</b> 6:30p Women Cooking for Women	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b> 9:00a Unichords 9:30a Adult RE 6:30p Newcomers Covenant Group	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> 11:30a Care Team 7:00p Covenant Group	<b>11</b> 6:45p Barn Bells 1 7:15p Barn Bells 2	<b>12</b> 6:30p Peace Study Group	<b>13</b> 9:00a Staff Mtg.	<b>14</b> 8:00a Adult Spirituality Workshop
<b>15</b> 9:00a Unichords 9:00a RE Council 9:30a Adult RE 12:30p Green Sanctuary  <i>Newsletter Deadline</i>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> 6:45p Barn Bells 1 7:00p Board of Trustees 7:15p Barn Bells 2	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> 9:00a Quilters 9:00a Landscape and Grounds Work Party
<b>22</b> 9:00a Unichords 9:30a Adult RE	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> 7:00p Covenant Group	<b>25</b> 6:45p Barn Bells 1 7:00p Intentional Living -O 7:15p Barn Bells 2	<b>26</b> 6:30p Peace Study Group	<b>27</b> 9:00a Staff Mtg.	<b>28</b> 9:00a Landscape and Grounds
<b>29</b> 9:00a Unichords 9:30a Adult RE	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>				

## Month of Sundays

### May

#### 1 **This I Believe**

Our congregation is rich in diverse belief systems. It is part of what makes our community so unique. Today, Mitch Kremer, Rhonda Merritt, and Andrea Schmidlin will share with us a bit about their spiritual/religious beliefs. *Service led by Elise Wall.*

#### 8 **Getting Closer To Her**

Reflections on a Mother's Day on the complexities of the mother-child relationship—and being grateful. *Service led by the Rev. Dan Brosier.*

#### 15 **Letters To Dan**

Each year I imagine that I get numerous letters asking my advice on profound religious questions. In this service I will share with you some of those letters and my responses. *Service led by the Rev. Dan Brosier.*

#### 22 **Toxic Influences In Our Lives and What To Do About Them**

A service devoted to looking at some of the things that undermine our lives in this culture and actions that can be taken to counter them. *Service led by the Youth Group.*

#### 29 **Honoring Our Soldiers**

Today, we will take time out to remember the soldiers who have died in Iraq by listening to the stories their families tell. The stories were collected from military students in Karen's classes. *Service led by Karen Olesch-Williams.*

SERVICES BEGIN AT 10:45 A.M.  
WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU

## ANNUAL RUMMAGE SALE JUNE 16-18

Planning has begun for the annual Rummage Sale, and it is shaping up to be bigger and better than ever! This year, in addition to our traditional sale, we will again have the UUniques Boutique (for finer items of clothing, jewelry, household goods, and collectibles). We are also planning a plant sale, a bake sale, and a 50/50 raffle. As always, we need YOU and we need your STUFF. Volunteers are needed in the following areas:

- **Publicity.** This includes writing and placing newspaper articles and ads, making more signs, putting out the signs, and posting notices at businesses and other venues around town. Contact: Helen Maxwell.
- **Setup.** This includes organizing the space for the sale, planning for the plant sale, bake sale, and 50/50 raffle, picking up donations (see below), unpacking donations, and pricing. Setup will begin Friday, June 6. Contact Sheryl Spence or Louette Rogers.
- **During the Sale.** This includes working at the sale—keeping the space neat and organized, answering customers' questions, helping with the plant sale, bake sale, and 50/50 raffle, and staffing the check-out table. Contact Andrea Schmidlin.
- **Packup/Cleanup.** This includes boxing up leftover donations and putting the church "back together." Contact Pat Pecho.

You are welcome to bring your donations to the church any time after the service on Sunday, June 5. After that Sunday, call the church or Andrea Schmidlin to make sure the church is open for you to bring your donations. Every year, we seem to have a mad rush of people bringing their donations the day (or night!) prior to the sale. This makes it very difficult for the volunteers to get ready for the sale. PLEASE do everything you can to help us out by bringing your items well before the start of the sale.

We LOVE clean, gently used items. Please take a look at your donations, and avoid bringing us things that are broken, stained, etc. Our most popular items include collectibles, furniture, designer items, jewelry, and just about anything that looks like new. If you have a large and/or heavy item that you would like to donate but are unable to bring to the church, contact Sheryl Spence or Louette Rogers, and they will help arrange for pickup.

## HEARING EACH OTHER'S STORIES

New Garden Community (UU) Church is hosting a day-long workshop called Hearing Each Other's Stories: Communicating Compassionately Across the Racial Divide. Saturday, June 4, 9:00 a.m.–3:30 p.m. at the United Electrical Workers Hall, 37 S. Ashland in Chicago. Cost is \$20 including lunch, but no one will be turned away. For more information, contact (312) 405-9470 or [www.NewGardenUU.org](http://www.NewGardenUU.org).

## Announcements

### CIRCLE OF LIFE

We share the joy of Amy Hill and Jameel Abdur-Rafia in the birth of Olivia Beverly.

### 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.

April 29 - "The Time Traveler's Wife" by Audrey Niffenegger. At the home of Barbara Sugden.

June 10 - "Holy Cow" by Sarah MacDonald. At the home of Alice Macy.

June 24 - "Girl in Hyacinth Blue" by Susan Vreeland. At the home of Shirley Wolin.

July 29 - "Cane River" by Lalita Tademy. At the home of Margot Cusimano.

August 26 - "Easter Island" by Jennifer Vanderbes. At the home of Pat Pecho.

### MAY 1 ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Our annual congregational meeting will be held on Sunday, May 1 after the service. At this meeting the congregation will be electing new members to the Board, RE Council, and Endowment Fund Committee, and approving a budget for the coming fiscal year. All members are encouraged to attend.

### NEWCOMERS' BBQ AND POTLUCK

The 2005 Newcomers' Family BBQ and Potluck will be held this year on Thursday, June 9 at 6:00 pm. If you have started coming to our church, or become a member of the church, since June of last year, please plan on bringing a dish to share and joining us. The Membership and Hospitality Teams will provide drinks, burgers, hot dogs and veggie burgers. A sign-up sheet will be available in the Fellowship Hall. Children are welcome to join in the fun. Or if you need childcare for an infant or toddler please notify Linda Porter by May 29.

### A THANK YOU AND A REMINDER

Thank you for your generous donations to the Inter-faith Food Pantry last month! Keep up the good work in May. Try to remember to bring your donations on Pantry Sunday, May 1, but, as always, your contributions are welcome any time during the month. The Pantry staff mentioned that breakfast items are always needed.

### RACE DISCUSSION GROUP

An interesting new program has started at UUCE—the Race Discussion Group. At its initial meeting, the group members decided that they want to provide a safe and open forum for people to discuss issues around race. So far, we have had several very interesting discussions. We have talked about why we're interested in this discussion group, when we first realized there were differences in skin color/race/ethnicity, and how much and what type of contact we currently have with people from other races. We have each benefitted from hearing several different perspectives on each question. Won't you join us and tell us YOUR perspective? We meet bi-weekly at 12:30 on the third floor at the church. If you have questions, contact Jameel Abdur-Rafia or Andrea Schmidlin.

### Kudos to:

**Rusty Winchel, Joe Masonick, the Canvass Team**, canvassers and all who pledged during a successful canvass; **Sheena John** for supervising the spring grounds clean-up; **Kathy Hislip** for serving tirelessly as a substitute child care provider in 2004-2005; **Phil Webster** for donating a coffee table to the Adult Sunday School Classroom; **Pingree Grove Fire Department** for burning our prairie; the **Religious Education Council** for organizing the Birthday Potluck and Maypole Dance; **Ruth Gnuechtel** for baking the Beltane cake; **Anne and Bob Bedard** for leading the youth camping trip; **Mila Brinker and Jennifer Briggs** for their service on the RE Council; **Trent Sherrell** for design of closing song words for the sanctuary hallway; **Eric Prebys** for strengthening the chalice table.



### BECOMING A MEMBER OF UUCE

Membership in the Unitarian Universalist Church of Elgin 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 growth of the 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. An annual contribution of record of not less than \$50.00 is required to maintain voting member status. The act of becoming a member is accomplished through signing our Membership Book. See the Minister, Dan Brosier, or Membership Chair, Linda Porter, for more information about becoming a member. Our next welcoming ceremony for new members is May 15, 2005.

### MEN'S BIKE TRIP

Any interested men from the congregation are invited to join us in a northwestern Illinois bicycling adventure from July 14-16. It will involve two days of riding approximately fifty miles a day along the Mississippi River on the Great River Trail. For further information, contact Paul Anderson, Dan Brosier, Tim Davis, Joe Masonick, Eric Prebys or Todd Underwood.

### UUs for Social Justice Spring Quarterly Meeting

The UUSJ Spring Quarter Board Meeting, with a preceding program of broad interest, will be held on Sunday, May 22, 2005, from 2 to 5 p.m., at Beverly Unitarian Church, 10244 S. Longwood Dr., Chicago. The program portion of the meeting, lasting from 2 to 3 p.m., is entitled "Human Rights and the Criminal Justice System." The speaker will be ACLU attorney Shannon Bartlett, who will focus on human rights and the criminal justice system in Illinois and its various locales. The UUSJ Board of Directors will meet following the program; its meeting is open to all interested individuals.

## Religious Education

It's hard to believe that there are only six more weeks in the regular church year! This time of the year is always a challenge for me. There are still many things to continue for the current year, and yet there is a lot of planning to be done for the next year. Having just attended the District Assembly last week, I came back with many resources and ideas to ponder and put to good use in the next year.



Kathy Underwood, DRE

One thing that will be different this summer will be an increase in the number of Sunday services. The Religious Education Council is planning activities for children and youth for those Sundays. If you are available to help one Sunday over the summer, please let me know. We also have a position available for youth who would like to help with nursery-aged children during the summer services. This job can be shared by several youth who may want to keep some weekends free. Contact me if you would like to apply.

Looking ahead, on May 29 we will be having our last nature hike at Burnidge Woods. All children and youth in preschool through high school are invited to attend. Hopefully we will see some late spring flowers, frogs, deer, and birds.

The RE Council is also busy recruiting teachers for next year's program, which will have the theme of world religions. This is a favorite for both children and adults!

Here's what will be happening in the classrooms this month:

- May 1   Preschool: "Friendship"  
          K-2nd: "Wondering About God"  
          3rd-5th: "The Parable of the Good Samaritan"  
          6th-8th: Adopt-A-Highway  
          High School: Adopt-A-Highway
- May 8   Preschool: "Fixed"  
          K-2nd: "Love Your Neighbor"  
          3rd-5th: "Jesus & the Canaanite Women"  
          6th-8th: "Cults"  
          High School: Planning a Worship Service
- May 15   Preschool: "Lost"  
          K-2nd: "Yom ha-Atzmaut"  
          3rd-5th: "Peter's Denial"  
          6th-8th: "Celebrating Our Sources"  
          High School: Planning a Worship Service
- May 22   Preschool: "Teddy Bear Party"  
          K-2nd: "Shavuot"  
          3rd-5th: "Pentecost"  
          6th-8th: Attending the Worship Service  
          High School: Presenting the Worship Service
- May 29   All Classes: Nature Hike at Burnidge Woods

In Faith,  
Kathy

## OVERCOMING EMPTINESS WORKSHOP

Presented by Karen Olesch-Williams on May 14

8:00am-5:00pm (check in and breakfast begins at 7:30am)

Cost: \$40 (includes breakfast, lunch, 85-page manual)

To Sign Up: send an email to [Karen@karenwilliamscenter.com](mailto:Karen@karenwilliamscenter.com) or put your name on the signup sheet in the Fellowship Hall.

### About the Workshop

The workshop's forum style combines lecture, direct "questions and answers," small workgroup collaboration, open discussion with the speaker, private, individual workbook exercises throughout the day and personal interaction with the instructor.

### What We Will Cover — *Mind, Body & Soul*

1. Overcoming feelings of emptiness
2. Finding purpose & meaning in your life
3. "I feel like something is missing..."
4. "I've tried to change, but can't..."
5. "I'm not satisfied with my job, my life..."
6. "I have a good family, but..."
7. "I'm uninterested in things..."
8. "I don't have or can't set goals..."
9. "How can I change stress or anger..."
10. "I can't sleep, I lack energy..."
11. "My diets don't work..."
12. "My medications don't seem to help..."

### Presentation & Workshop — *Putting it all together*

1. Identify your beliefs
2. Keys to success—mind, body & soul
3. How to identify your purpose and meaning
4. Characteristics that describe you
5. Becoming who you want to be
6. How to find your "calling"
7. Importance of dreams and goals
8. Steps to a better partner relationship
9. Changing to healthy behavior
10. Defining, changing your "negative" voice
11. Defining "Soul Stress"
12. Creating a realistic plan of action



Parents and kids enjoyed wrapping the traditional Maypole after the service on Sunday, April 24.

# Co-Presidents' Report

Dear Church Community,

This is my final opportunity to speak with you through the Co-presidents' column. I am resigning as co-president to take on the responsibilities of Groups and Activities Programming Coordinator which will place me on the Executive Team. I am looking forward to this new position. It has been a privilege and a pleasure serving as one half of the co-presidents team. I must admit I got the fun part of the job; while Dan ran the meetings, and fielded questions and organized things, my main focus was keeping him in check. I couldn't have had a better partner to share the title with.



*Dan and Kathy Hislip  
Board Co-Presidents*

There is a Zen invocation that reads:

- The Way is long — let us go together.
- The Way is difficult — let us help each other.
- The Way is joyful — let us share it.
- The Way is ours alone — let us go in love.
- The Way grows before us — let us begin.

I probably could have used this at the beginning of our time together, but I like to think that we have already gone together and helped each other and shared our joys and grown in community. I'm not going anywhere—you'll still see me roaming the halls. I'll still be trying to keep Dan in check and I'll still be in our beloved community as we work together to make us the best we can be. Thank you all.

In peace and community,  
Kathy

## WOMEN COOKING FOR WOMEN

The next "Women Cooking For Women" dinner will be held on Friday, May 6th, 2005. Women, 13 and older, are invited, asked to bring a dish to share (anything goes!), and to donate \$5 (or more) to the focus cause or project of the evening. You can come and not cook, but then we ask that you donate \$10 (or more). We also welcome donations from those of you unable to attend. Donations may be put in the soup pot on the Social Justice table in Fellowship Hall.



The monies collected in May will benefit the International Rescue Committee aid agency, which helps people fleeing from racial, religious and ethnic persecution, as well as those uprooted by war and violence. We will be discussing the conflict in the Darfur area of Sudan and how this conflict has affected women.

Food should be ready to be served by 7:00p.m. Friends and family members are welcome to attend. Please sign up on the clipboard or RSVP to Laurie Kiesewetter or Andrea Schmidlin. If you have not RSVP'd, and find yourself free on May 6... please come!

### Ways to Get in Touch

Church Office	847-888-0668
Web site	<a href="http://www.uuce.org">www.uuce.org</a>
Newsletter Submissions	<a href="mailto:newsletter@uuce.org">newsletter@uuce.org</a>

#### Board Co-Presidents

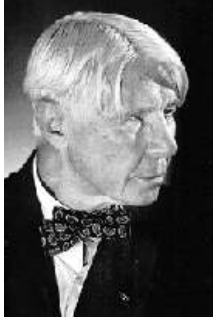
Dan & Kathy Hislip

#### Newsletter Editor:

Todd Underwood

#### Deadlines

Order of Service	Thursday PM
Unichord	May 15



### Who Am I?

This famous UU poet was born in Galesburg, Illinois, of Swedish immigrant parents. Much of his poetry focused on Chicago, and he was a leading figure in the group of writers from this city who formed the literary movement called the Chicago Renaissance. He also won a Pulitzer Prize for his monumental biography, Abraham Lincoln: The War Years.

*(answer will appear in the next Unichord)*

*April's Who Am I was Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley.*

### May Birthdays

- |                       |                      |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 5 Dave Underwood      | 20 Babette Colburn   |
| 7 Rhonda Merritt      | 22 Frieda Anderson   |
| 7 Keith Ginn          | 22 Dennis Schwank    |
| 9 Joe Masonick        | 24 Carol Schoengart  |
| 9 Sarah Davis         | 24 Chris Merritt     |
| 11 Jameel Abdur-Rafia | 25 Timothy Forrester |
| 14 Gretl Kramer       | 26 Jax Sherrell      |
| 14 Paul Masonick      | 26 Jim Tischke       |
| 16 Esther Hermann     | 27 Aaron Briggs      |
| 17 Chris Ecker        | 29 Emily Waldron     |
| 19 Matthew Rodda      | 29 Brandi Talaga     |
| 20 Kyle Underwood     |                      |



# The Unitarian Universalist Church of Elgin

P.O. Box 1032

Elgin, IL 60121 (847) 888-0668

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

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

## **SECOND SERVICE TASK FORCE IDENTIFIES ACTIVITIES**

The Second Service Task Force (names below) has been working hard! At our April meeting we continued our study of other UU congregations which have gone to two Sunday morning worship services. We considered input from CMwD representative, Angela Merkert. We also generated a list of Sunday morning activities that would be affected by adding a second service. The activities we identified are:

- Music (will it be the same at both services)
- RE (Youth and Adult; will there be full RE at both services)
- Coffee (one coffee hour between services or one after each service)
- Welcoming/Hospitality (staffing greeters and cleanup)
- Parking (do we need more space)
- Worship (two identical services or two different service styles; times of services)
- Committee meetings (should they be moved to another day of the week)
- Finance (additional costs for utilities, staff, and orders of service; offering collection)
- Programs (when should they meet)
- Social activities (how to handle after service potlucks)
- Child care (what hours do we offer)
- Staffing (increased hours for Minister, DRE, musicians)
- Congregational gatherings (how to include everyone)
- Maintenance (increased due to greater building use)
- Ceremonies (new member, child dedication)
- Office support (order of service)

If you think of something we have missed, please let us know. Also, if you have questions about our process or progress, please contact one of us. We are: Andrea Schmidlin (chair), Dan Brosier, Kathy Underwood, Carl Deitrick, Linda Porter (ex officio), Steve Askins, Alice Macy, and Elise Wall.

### *Ways to get involved*

- Sign up and come to the Spirituality Workshop
- Help plant prairie plants at the Landscape and Grounds Work Party
- Volunteer to help plan the Prairie Fest.