



The

U N I C H O R D

September 2005

Unitarian Universalist Church of Elgin

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RETURN OF PRAIRIE FEST

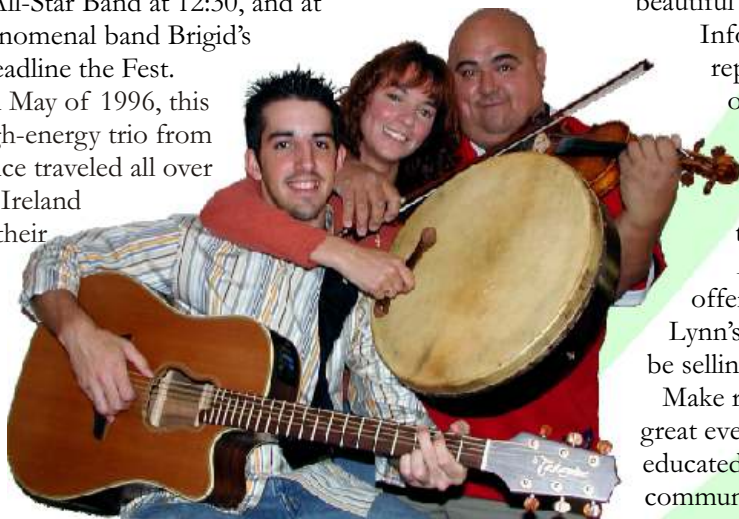
The Second Annual Prairie Fest is nearly here and excitement is building for the October 1 event. Refining last year's successful format, Prairie Fest 2005 will include a guest speaker, live music, informational booths, art/craft vendors, educational demonstrations and tours, and plenty of delicious food and drink.

At 10:30 a.m., Joyce O'Keefe will give a half-hour presentation describing her experiences with open land issues. She will then join a panel of local leaders for an audience participation discussion to share political, commercial and environmental perspectives and interests in Kane County.

Ms. O'Keefe is the Deputy Director at Openlands Project, one of the nation's oldest and most successful urban conservation organizations. To date, Openlands Project has taken leadership roles in securing more than 45,000 acres of land in the Chicago area for public parks, forest preserves, land and water greenway corridors, and urban gardens.

The music stage then opens up with performances by the UUCE All-Star Band at 12:30, and at 2:30 the phenomenal band Brigid's Cross will headline the Fest.

Formed in May of 1996, this dynamic, high-energy trio from Ohio has since traveled all over the U.S. and Ireland performing their unique blend of Celtic folk/rock music. From the shores of the Great



Lakes to the Key West waters, from New York to Las Vegas to the hills of Donegal.

The musicians will be performing outdoors (weather permitting) on an autumnal-themed stage overlooking our beautiful prairie.

Informational booths will be staffed with representatives from a wide variety of organizations, including the Sierra Club, McHenry County Defenders, the Kane County Forest Preserve District, Chicago Botanical Gardens, Friends of the Fox, and the Fox Valley Land Foundation.

As for the edibles, home-baked goods will be offered in two locations. Karen's Café (formerly Lynn's) will sell salads, wraps and soups, and we will be selling coffee and drinks as well.

Make room on your calendar to be a part of this great event. It's an opportunity to be entertained, educated, and to relax with members of our community.

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HELP WANTED

We are in need of help before, during and after Prairie Fest. In particular, we need help with setting up for the festival on Friday and Saturday mornings; parking; manning (or wo-manning) our church information, children's, craft, and food booths; security; baking for the home-baked goods booth; and clean-up. Sign-up sheets are in the foyer of the church. Please take part in one of the biggest events of our church year. For more information, contact Linda Porter at prairiefest@uuce.org.

From the Minister

Certainly not everything about ministry has become increasingly clear over the years, but in terms of who we are as a religious community, some things are ever more evident. Re-membering who we are in this way invites hope, a sense of direction, and a renewed energy.



Rev. Dan Brosier

We are a religious community, and so...

We are concerned about justice—and we act to create more of it in the world.

We are concerned about creating meaningful lives.

We find strength and insight through our relationships.

We are concerned about the fundamental forces that caress and shape our lives and the entire universe.

We are concerned about learning to live in right relationship with those forces and the world through which they are manifested.

We are committed to deepening and broadening our ability to love.

We are concerned about helping each other navigate important transitions and challenges in life—like serious illness, death and loss, birth, marriage/holy union.

We strive to experience the awesomeness of existence and understand that we are a part.

We strive to appreciate and give thanks for the many gifts that life brings.

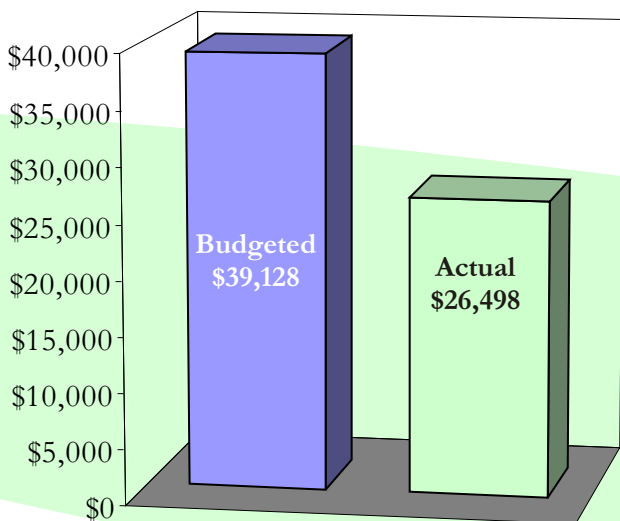
We commit to humbly examine our lives to find ways to love more and fear less.

We have faith in our principles—that living by them will make our lives more satisfying and joyful.

We strive to express the holiness/wholeness of human being.

This is certainly enough to keep me busy for another year.

Member Pledges—2005-06 Fiscal Year



The 2005-2006 budget calls for \$117,500 in pledges; four month's worth of this figure is \$39,128. Questions? Contact your Finance Coordinator, Alice Macy.

FROM YOUR CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR

Back To Church Potluck

Sunday, September 11, is our first Sunday back at church for the Fall season. It will also see the return of our annual Back to Church Potluck. Bring a dish to share and join us. We try to keep this potluck simple in order to cut down on the work. We will use paper plates (made from recycled paper) and everyone is responsible for ensuring that the container for their potluck dish goes home with them for washing or disposal. Also, there will be a list posted of clean-up tasks so everyone can pitch in at the end. In this way, we hope to minimize clean-up time and allow the potluck organizers (your Executive Team) to participate in the fun.



Linda Porter

New Directory Available Soon

Our church office is working on a new church directory. A copy will be available on a table in the front foyer for you to review to ensure that your information is correct. Please take a minute to check the directory, especially if you have had any changes to your address, phone number, e-mail address, or even your family since the last directory was published in the Spring.

Volunteers Needed

If you are a member or friend at UUCE, we hope you will consider volunteering to help out during the church year. Here are a few of the volunteer opportunities available to you:

- 1) Sign up to greet, make coffee, or clean up on Sunday;
- 2) Help with routine activities such as building maintenance, office work, gardening, or hospitality;
- 3) Join a committee or team;
- 4) Volunteer your talents to enhance our worship services;
- 5) Join a Bell Choir;
- 6) Volunteer to teach a Religious Education (RE) Class or help with an RE activity; or
- 7) Sign up to help at regularly scheduled special events, fundraising activities, and work parties throughout the year.

The possibilities for helping are endless, the rewards are great, and you may find yourself having fun as you work. An updated copy of our Things to Do at UUCE lists the various activities for the early Fall along with contact information; or contact UUCE Church Administrator, Linda Porter, at or administrator@uuce.org, if you are interested in volunteering now.

Questions, Concerns, Suggestions?
Contact Linda Porter, administrator@uuce.org

UUCE Calendar September



2005

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 6:30p Second Service Task Force	2	3
4	5	6 7:00p Spiritual Inquiry Covenant Group	7 7:00p COM -102	8	9	10
11 9:00a Unichords 9:15a RE Council 9:30a Worship Com. -102 12:30p All-church Potluck	12 7:00p Intentional Living Covenant Group	13 7:00p Covenant Group	14 6:45p Barn Bells 2 6:45p PR Comm. 7:00p Finance Comm. 7:15p Barn Bells 1	15	16	17
18 9:00a Unichords 9:30a Adult RE 12:15p Women Cooking for Women Meeting 12:30p Green Sanctuary Newsletter Deadline	19	20 11:30a Covenant Group	21 6:45p Barn Bells 2 7:00p Board Mtg. 7:15p Barn Bells 1	22	23 7:00p Book Group -O	24 9:00a qUilters
25 9:30a Adult RE 12:30p 2nd Service Discussion Group	26 7:00p Intentional Living Covenant Group	27 7:00p Covenant Group	28 6:45p Barn Bells 2 7:15p Barn Bells 1	29	30	

Month of Sundays

September

4 **Art of the Soul**

Each year we hear from a few of our own artists about their passion for their creative endeavors. This Sunday we will hear from Margot Cusimano, Tim King, and Cheren Waller. We will also have creative works displayed in the Fellowship Hall from a number of UU artisans. Please join us for this final Summer Service at 9:45. Service led by Elise Wall.

11 **Water Communion**

On this Sunday a new church year begins, the summer dispersion ends, and the community gathers in larger numbers. On this Sunday we will hold our first water communion when we celebrate the gifts that community offers. Members and friends are encouraged to bring a small amount of water from a place that has meaning to them. This water can actually come from that place, or you can use tap water as a stand in. During the service we will collect the water in a common vessel and share some of what it means. Service led by the Rev. Dan Brosier.

18 **Common Threads: What Holds UUs Together**

Unitarian Universalists hold a wide range of beliefs. We have no theological creed that we hold in common. Freedom, individuality, and independence are values held tightly by many. But something holds us together—something connects each and every one of us. Service led by the Rev. Dan Brosier.

25 **Letters To Rev. Dan**

Periodically I look over the numerous letters I imagine I receive 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.

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

EAT AND MEET—A NEW UUCE EVENT!

The Programming Council, which consists of the coordinators for Social Action, Groups and Activities, and Religious Education, announces a new event: Eat and Meet! You may have heard us talk about this idea last year, and now we're ready to give it a try. If we like it, we'll keep it!

On October 12 and 26, the festivities will begin at 6:00 p.m. with a light supper for the cost of \$5 per person or \$15 per family. After supper, we will clean up together before proceeding to meetings, Barn Bells, and other programs.

Programs, you ask? Our hope is to have several choices of programs for all ages. For starters, there will be a drumming circle. Another idea in motion is a parenting group. Is there something you would like to see or offer? Let us know by September 18 so we can announce it in the next newsletter.

Miss Debbie will be providing childcare at no cost to parents from 6:30-9:00 p.m. The childcare will be for children who are not yet in the bell choir, and for bell ringers while they are not in rehearsal. There will be a quiet room for those who need to do homework.

We will be seeking your input on your experience and how to add to it should we decide to continue Eat and Meet. We hope this idea takes off so that we can offer more opportunities for all ages.

-The Programming Council—Kathy Hislip, Andrea Schmidlin, and Kathy Underwood

SECOND SERVICE TASK FORCE

Even though the church has been on a summer schedule, the Second Service Task Force (SSTF) has been busy talking to committee chairs, and those in leadership positions whose areas of responsibility would be affected by adding a second service. Among others, we've talked to the leaders of the Religious Education program, the musicians, the people organizing the worship services, and the people handling church finances. Their concerns and questions will be considered in our recommendations to the Board of Trustees.

Now we want to listen to questions and concerns from the rest of the congregation. To do that we're planning a series of small focus group meetings during September and October at which members and friends can give us their thoughts, feelings, questions, concerns, issues, etc about adding a second service. The meetings will be offered at various places, times of day, and days of the week. The first one will be Sunday, September 25 at church after the service. If you would like to attend that focus group meeting, contact Andrea Schmidlin to reserve a space. Dates, times, and places for the other focus group meetings will be announced when the new church year starts. We want to keep the group meetings small, so we encourage you to reserve a space as soon as you can after the schedule is announced.

Announcements

NEW MEMBERS

Since our last Unichord, Danielle and John Foster, Mahi Kazi, Stacey Reynolds, Heike Spayne, Bob Sandidge, and Anne Ward have signed the membership book. We joyfully welcome them into our church community.

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.

September 23 – “1,000 White Women: The Journals of May Dodd: A Novel” by Jim Fergus.

At the home of Helen Maxwell.

October 28 – “Songs of the Gorilla Nation: My Journey Through Autism” by Dawn Prince-Hughes.

At the home of Denise Benson.

HANDBELL CHOIRS

Our handbell choirs are back in action. The Unichords' first rehearsal will be September 11 at 9:00 a.m. in the bell half of Rm 203. Barn Bells will have its first rehearsal September 14 at 7:15 p.m., and Barn Bells Two's first rehearsal will be September 14 at 6:45 p.m.. Goodies served after ringing (not Polish sausage).

If you are a completely new ringer, please contact me at 847-381-6292 for some info and possibly an extra practice.

-Margot Cusimano.

QUILTING

Our first qUUILT day of the year is Saturday, September 24, at 9:30 a.m. at the church. Join us as we cut up perfectly good fabric, only to sew it back together again. This year's theme is “Blueprint Blues” so bring 100% cotton fabric of any blue print. New faces are welcome: you don't have to be experienced, or have internal plumbing! Just be able to count to eight.

Questions? Contact Frieda Anderson.

CIRCLE SUPPERS

From October thru April (omit December), members and friends meet once a month in groups of six to eight for an evening of shared good food and sparkling conversation. Guests bring a dish to the home of the host, who plans the menu and prepares the main dish. We alternate hosting. Participants can be ‘regular’ or ‘alternate.’ An alternate does not host, but is invited as a guest if a regular is not available.

Our goal this season is to have at least 24 hosting units. A hosting unit is a single person or a couple serving as host once (sometimes more) each season. The plan is to meet in October, November, January, February, March, and April. Some choose to extend into May! Suppers have usually been planned for the third Saturday, but that is NOT in concrete, so please sign up regardless of other plans or commitments you may have. Hosts and guests are, after all, flexible UUs!

Sign up on the clipboard in Fellowship Hall. Or call Bonnie or Dennis Schwank. You'll be late for supper if you miss the DEADLINE: 6:00 P.M., SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 25. We will send all participants the 2005-2006 Circle Supper Schedule via email (snailmail to those among you who are still not PC slaves).

Buon Appetito!

Kudos to:

Paul Anderson, Jack Berry, Tim Davis, Joe Masonick, Jim Porter, Janeen Vanko and Phil Webster for mowing in August; **Jim Bottino** for installing a computer network at the church; **Mary Alice Masonick and Jim & Linda Porter** for watering plants and trees during the drought; **Louette & Jim Bottino, Kim Cecil, Trish Dean, Ann Kremer and Babette Colburn** for helping out this summer with RE Activities; **Todd Underwood** for creating the new Prairie Fest 2005 brochures; **Jim Burnidge** for his continuing care of the indoor plants; and everyone who pitched in to weed the labyrinth.



YOUTH GROUP ACTIVITIES

The Youth Group will have its first meeting after the service on September 11. Lunch will be provided. We will be discussing ideas for activities and service. We will then go to GameWorks in Schaumburg. Over the summer, youth group members volunteered to help with the MS charity bike ride and went camping at Devil's Lake in Wisconsin.

For more information on the group, please contact Bob Bedard.

A REMINDER

This is a reminder to pop some items into your shopping cart for the Interfaith Food Pantry every time you go shopping. Bring in your donations on Sunday, September 11, our designated Pantry Sunday for September. As in the past, your donations are welcome any time during the month.

The Pantry has the following items on their list of needed products: baby food, instant potato buds, jelly, peanut butter, cereal, juice, canned fruit, toilet paper, shampoo, and laundry and hand soap.

THE LESSONS OF LOSS

In this unique four-week curriculum participants will engage in discussions about loss and grief, gain a better understanding of what loss means, and thus be able to engage more fully in life. We will develop a common language around loss and grief in order to enhance communication about a difficult topic. The class will be offered Sunday mornings, 9-10:30 a.m. October 2nd, 9th, 16th, and 23rd. Class limited to 15 adults (18 years and older). Class led by Elise Wall.

SAVE THE DATE

Save Saturday, October 22 on your calendar for the Leadership Retreat sponsored by the Committee on the Ministry. If you are on the Board of Trustees, part of the Executive Team, or a committee chair, please plan on attending.

NEW CHAIR TRAINING

If you are a new chair of a committee, please plan on attending a workshop before church on September 18 from 9:00 - 10:30 a.m.. Our discussion will hopefully help strengthen our committee process and your leadership skills. This workshop is sponsored by the Committee on the Ministry. Breakfast will be served. Please R.S.V.P. to Laurie Kieseewetter or Leslie Sawyer.

Religious Education

Welcome to the 2005 church year! I hope you had a wonderful summer, and that you are looking forward to the promise of a new year at UUCE.

This year, our Sunday morning religious education program will be centered on the "World Religions" theme. All classes will be focusing on this except for preschool. This theme is a favorite of all ages, so it will be a fun year!

Here is a brief look at what each class will be doing:

Preschool: This year we will be using the curriculum, "Story Time." There is a different theme each week, such as cooperation, caring for nature, self-worth, death, etc. The class uses a story based on each theme followed by a variety of activities.

Kindergarten-2nd Grades: This year, we have the excitement of having possibly 20 children enrolled. Therefore, we will have two classes, both of which will be located on the second floor. The curriculum, "Stories About God" exposes children to a variety of stories about God based on insights from many world religions, as well as feminist experience, science, and ordinary life experiences.

3rd-5th Grades: "Holidays and Holy Days" is a curriculum that celebrates the main holidays and holy days of about a dozen religions from around the world. Some of the activities we will be doing are making a prayer rug, enacting the story of Prince Rama with puppets, making yarn paintings, and having a tea pouring ceremony.

6th-8th Grades: Our curriculum for middle school will be "World Religions", which explores the basic beliefs and practices of many of the world's religions, and encourages youth to explore their beliefs and values as they relate to each religion covered.

High School: The youth, along with their teachers, will determine what topics they would like to learn about during the year. While many of them will center on the world religions theme, some will be varied depending on issues they are facing at this point in their lives.

Outside of Sunday morning classes, there are two more programs occurring this year. First, we are working with the Congregational Unitarian Church of Woodstock to run the Our Whole Lives sexuality program for youth in grades 7-9. This program requires parents to attend an orientation on October 4. Classes will meet once monthly on Saturdays from 3-9:30 p.m., and will alternate between the two churches.

Secondly, the youth group meets twice monthly for social activities and social action. The group is coordinated by Bob and Anne Bedard. Look for announcements in the order of service for specific events.

Registration for enrollment begins September 11 and goes through September 25 at the information table by the nametags. The cost is \$15 per student for the year, and scholarships are available for those who request one.

As with your child's regular schooling, we encourage parents to get involved. This helps you to learn more about what is happening in the classroom, and fosters a sense of priority for your child's spiritual and religious development. There are many ways to get involved: teach a class, be a classroom assistant, help at special events, serve on the Religious Education Council, or share a passion. Throughout the year there will be many opportunities to get involved! I'm looking forward to working with you this year.

In Faith,

Kathy Underwood, *Director of Religious Education*



Kathy Underwood

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 the chair of the Membership Committee, Pat Pecho, and the minister, Dan Brosier. The next session will begin on Sunday October 16 at 12:30 following the service. The second session will be the following Sunday 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 so indicate on the sign-up sheet by October 9. If you have any questions call Dan Brosier at the church.



Mitch Kremer tirelessly cleaned and checked ceiling lights during the All-Church Clean-up on August 27.



Part of the volunteer crew lines up for a delicious lunch at the All-Church Clean-up on August 27.



Dan Hislip

President's Report

Well, Fall must be coming. I went to the Cubs game the other night and had to wear a long-sleeved shirt. Of course that may have just been the lake effect in Chicago, but there are other signs. Kids are buying new pencils and notebooks for school. The Bears, Bulls and

Blackhawks are in training camps with their seasons just around the corner. And finally, we're starting to have worship services every week again.

So, I ask myself, are you ready to get restarted? Fortunately, I was able to answer affirmatively. In thinking about it, it's primarily because I've missed you. Absence does make the heart grow fonder. When I was up in front during the service on August 21, looking out on those brave enough to withstand thirty minutes on the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, I thought of how much I had missed those faces. Travel and circumstances have conspired to cause our absence from all but one of the summer services and there has been no adult Sunday School for almost three months. I need to reconnect with all of those folks.

Maybe I don't get hugged enough away from all of you or maybe I miss the jokes and awful puns that some of you bring with. Or maybe I miss the thoughtful and provoking discussions on such a wide range of topics.

I really can't wait to get back to our regular weekly visits. Which is not to say that I didn't have a great summer; I did and can't wait to swap "what I did last summer" stories with each of you. I do promise not to show the home movies or the photograph albums, though.

So, welcome back, it'll be good to see you. I can't wait for that first hug. And bring your smiles—they've been missing all summer.

Dan Hislip, Board President

GREEN CORNER

September Opportunity For Activism: Don't Let Big Oil Despoil the Arctic Wildlife Refuge

In late 2001, our church officially joined many other groups in opposition to drilling for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR). The battle over this pristine wilderness continues to rage and will be voted on by Congress in September. Please call or write your U.S. Senators and Representative (again!). This is the most important step you can take. Urge them to keep drilling out of the Arctic Refuge and to permanently protect the coastal plain as Wilderness (Capitol Switchboard: 202-224-3121).

Public pressure has been effective until now at protecting ANWR, and we need to let our legislators know how important this is to us. Sample letters are available in the Fellowship Hall, as well as background information about the issue.

Green Sanctuary Committee

Ways to Get in Touch

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

Board President

Dan Hislip

Newsletter Editor

Todd Underwood

Deadlines

Order of Service	Thursday PM
Unichord	September 18

September Birthdays

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Stan Forrester | 12 Jane Holish |
| 2 Susan Anderson | 18 Brandi Thompson |
| 4 Dave Briggs | 19 Mackensie Freeman |
| 6 Gail Tischke | 22 Ann Kremer |
| 7 Janeen Vanko | 23 Jim Porter |
| 10 Andy Carey | 26 Abigail Anderson |
| 10 Trent Sherrell | 28 Roslyn Tischke |
| 10 Anne Ward | 28 John Tischke |
| 12 Anna Navadomskis | |



Who Am I?

This famous UU's father was an itinerant Baptist minister and his mother was a Unitarian. His life-style was controversial, but the buildings he designed are admired throughout the world.

(Answer will appear in the next Unichord)
June's **Who Am I** was Paul Revere



The Unitarian Universalist Church of Elgin

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

UUA-UUSC GULF COAST RELIEF FUND

On Sunday, September 11, there will be a special collection to assist Unitarian Universalist congregations affected by hurricane Katrina. Checks may be made out to The UUA-UUSC Gulf Coast Relief Fund. Donations will be collected until October 2 and then forwarded to the Fund.

UUWORLD.ORG

If you've heard about this, you may have been imagining what UUWorld.org will look like, and if you've not gotten a chance to satisfy your curiosity by taking a peek at the UUA's new Web magazine was under construction, now's the time: UUWorld.org is live on the Web for you and the entire online world. So please click on www.uuworld.org and poke around a bit.

UUWorld.org's new weekly e-mail newsletter is also ready to go, and people out in UU-land have started signing up. You can sign up for this weekly newsletter on the above website... it alerts folks to fresh material on the Web magazine.

- *Dori Davenport, Central Midwest District Religious Educator & Growth Consultant.*

Ways to get involved

- Attend the All-Church Potluck on September 11
- Join one of the UUCE covenant groups
- Sign up to participate in Circle Suppers
- Attend and volunteer to help with Prairie Fest