



DECEMBER 2010

# Unichord



THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF ELGIN

## Strategic Plan Outlines Goals for 2011

The Strategic Plan, finalized on October 31 of this year, outlines a plan of action for the church for the next five years. The plan's goals for 2011 are listed here.

### STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

**THE STRATEGIC PLAN OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF ELGIN IS CREATED TO SET FORTH GOALS FOR THE CHURCH FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS. THESE GOALS FLOW FROM THE ENDS POLICIES, WHICH WERE CREATED BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES. THESE ENDS POLICIES WERE DEVELOPED FROM THE VISION AND MISSION STATEMENT.**

#### 1. Community

Goal: Within their first year of membership each member will be involved in at least two non-worship service events

Rationale: Connects new members to the community, which is essential to member retention and growth.

Goal: Develop three new/improved ways to inform the larger community about the UUCE every two years.

Rationale: Raises our visibility and lets people interested in liberal religion know that we exist.

Goal: Make the congregation aware of the conflict resolution policy each fall.

Rationale: Allows members to try to resolve intra-church conflict, which deepens their experience and allows them to stay involved.

#### 2. Freedom of Belief and Spiritual Inquiry

Goal: At least 75% of UUCE members, bound by the values expressed in our Seven UU Principles, believe that UUCE provides a safe spiritual community in which a religious belief is never the object of ridicule, but rather, of exploration and discovery.

Rationale: Allows more people to feel comfortable joining UUCE and continuing their memberships. Identifies UUCE by what we stand for, not by what we condemn.

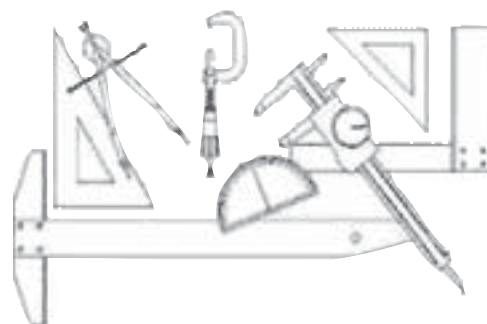
Goal: Existing worship services, programs and events that embrace religious and spiritual diversity are identified and evaluated. In addition, at least two new opportunities of this kind are added each year.

Rationale: Enables us to go beyond tolerance and identify ways our diverse beliefs and practices are expressions of UU principles thereby connecting us all to one another.

#### 3. Life Long Learning

Goal: Present and distribute to the congregation a list of available programs, groups and activities three times per year. Include information about how to start new programs.

Rationale: Increases involvement by raising awareness of opportunities for involvement.



*Continued on Page 5*

# From the Minister

Perhaps the most beautiful winter holiday scene that I can recall involved three spruce trees out in the middle of a dark field lit by a few strands of colored lights wrapped around each tree. Its simplicity was striking. It seemed to capture visually what the song Silent Night expressed musically. When I looked upon those trees in the dark of winter I felt a sense of peace and hope and quiet that I have felt few other times in my life. Again, it was the simplicity of the scene that was part of its power. Other



houses were lit up by millions of lights. They were impressive and fun, but they didn't invoke the spirit of the holidays like those few lights shining through the dark.

So this holiday season I have a request. I ask that if you come across a scene

that moves you into a sense of awe – into a sense of peace and quiet—that you share it with your church community. Take a few minutes and send out an email to the UUCE list describing the scene, where it is located, and when it's a good time to experience it. Hopefully a few more of us will be awed by an encounter with the beauty that abides in this the darkest season of the year.

Happy Holidays

—Dan

## Share the Plate

During each Sunday service we pass the baskets to collect an offering. Half the non-pledged cash donations collected are given to a charitable organization. In the month of December, this charitable organization is the Larkin Center, which works with troubled youth to offer them another chance at building a meaningful and satisfying existence. If you wish to write a check to support the program make it out to the UUCE and write "Share the Plate" on the memo line.

# A Month of Sundays

## DECEMBER

### 12/5: Deck the Halls

We mark the holiday season with a service devoted to decking out our building in holiday spirit and in so doing encourage it within ourselves. The morning begins with us all gathered in the sanctuary for a few minutes of opening words and music, and then we split up into various activities. It is a morning of activity and good cheer.

### 12/12: The Flame

Inspired by the tales around Hanukkah, this service celebrates the courage and hope that allows us to stand against oppression. This service is led by the Rev. Dan Brosier.

### 12/19: A Few of Our Favorite Holiday Stories and Poems

There are a great many stories and poems told in this holiday season. This morning we call forth the holiday spirit by re-telling a few of these. This service is led by the Rev. Dan Brosier.

### 12/24: Christmas Eve

Come join us as we celebrate the magic of the season through song and story. This year's service begins at 7:00 PM. Following the service there will be refreshments and participants are encouraged to bring an hors d'oeuvre to share. Service led by the Rev. Dan Brosier.

### 12/26: Is That All There Is?

A post-holiday service. This service is led by the Rev. Dan Brosier.

# December Calendar

Worship  
Services  
Sundays at  
10:45



Deck  
the Halls  
Service  
December 5

Adult  
Religious Exploration and Education  
Sundays at 9:00, rooms 301 and 302

Afternoon Book Group  
December 27 at 12:30, off-site

Bell Practice  
December 5, 12, & 19 at 9:15

Bells Ring for the Worship Service  
December 19

Board Meeting  
December 15 at 7:00 in the Fellowship Hall

Buddhist Group  
Thursdays at 7:00 in rooms 301 & 302

Care Team  
December 21 at 10:00 in the Fellowship Hall



Choir Practice  
December 2, 9, 16, & 23 at 7:30 p.m.

Committee on the Ministry  
December 1 at 7:00

Evening Covenant Group  
December 14 & 28 at 7:00,  
off-site

Executive  
Team  
December  
14 at 1:30

Green  
Sanctuary  
December  
19 at 12:30  
in room 301

Landscape & Grounds Work Party  
December 12 at 12:30

Pagan Unity Book Club  
December 14 at 7:00 in the Fellowship Hall

Pagan Unity Choir Practice  
December 1 & 15 at 7:00 in the Sanctuary

qUilters  
December 4 from 9:00-12:00 in room 302

Social Justice Council  
December 22 at 7:00 in the Fellowship Hall

Western Crescent Ministers Meeting  
December 15 at 11:00 in room 301



Christmas  
Eve Service  
December 24  
7:00 p.m.



# Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

20 October, 7:00pm

Attending: Board Members Jennifer Day, Kevin Sweeney, Betsy Thrasher, Steve Stultz, Beth Cooper-Zobott, Andrea Schmidlin, Dave Clough, and Executive Team Member Alice Macy

- Budget report (questions on two line items, approval postponed until further information received)
- Earmarked Funds, Executive Team, Monitoring Reports approved by consensus
- Unfinished Business:
  - a. Strategic Plan Kickoff—Strategic Plan item #5 added to the Ends Policy. Strategic Plan will be made available to the membership electronically, and printed copies can be requested.
  - b. Security Policy Changes Follow up – Beth to follow up with Executive Team to clarify what

updates have been made regarding building security.

- New Business:
  - a. Board Covenant—approved by consensus with minor corrections for grammar.
  - b. Work Calendar—Kevin Sweeney will check into information on external audit and Endowment Committee updates. Calendar to be updated by adding review of Governance Process I to January tasks, and will make minor additions to March task list for clarity.
  - c. Review Service Calendar—no changes
  - d. Review 2010 Board Retreat Goals—general discussion
  - e. Convene Task Force on staff compensation—Steve Stultz and Betsy Thrasher will be our task force.

## Strategic Plan Goals for 2011, continued

Goal: Present five new lay-led programs per year.

Rationale: Increases diversity of offerings, attracts new members, and helps develop new leaders.

### 4. Social Justice

Goal: Partner with at least 2 other organizations, one of which must be new to UUCE, on a sustainability project.

Rationale: Strengthens UUCE's ability to positively impact environmental sustainability.

Goal: Maintain Green Sanctuary certification, and apply for re-certification every three years.

Rationale: Supports our commitment to the 7th Principle - the Interdependent Web of Existence of which we are a part.

Goal: Encourage youth (ages Pre-K through 8th grade) involvement in Social Justice programs and activities by having each age group participate in at least two Social Justice projects during the church year.

Rationale: Engages our young people in Service Learning, which promotes a sense of social responsibility consistent with the UU faith,

and in turn helps to meet real community needs.

### 5. Stewardship

Goal: Resurface the Labyrinth with a durable material which is environmentally friendly and provides weed control.

Rationale: Maintains and enhances an attractive and usable asset.

Goal: Discuss and identify leaders and potential leaders in the congregation.

Rationale: Allows us to be better able to fill Board and Committee Chair positions as necessary.

Goal: Annually, hold a leadership retreat off-site in a neutral space.

Rationale: Allows church leadership a chance to form better bonds to foster communication; allows all attendees to participate without the draw of "business as usual."

Goal: Compile and maintain a "UUsers Guide" handbook which gives necessary information about how to get things done in our church, as well as policies and by-laws.

Rationale: Allows all church members to understand and navigate the church.

# Kudos

—Several members of UUCE helped clean up the litter along Highland Avenue near our church on November 7. Thank you to Olivia and Chris Leyba, Mike Moutrie, Dottie Carringi, Deb Caruso, Darla Musson, and Joe Masonick.—The Green Sanctuary Committee

—Mary Alice Masonick and crew for coordinating the Winter Farmers Market. Sandy James and Dotty Carringi for coordinating the artisans

—Melissa Owens for coordinating the CROP walk

—Donna Askins for all her work on behalf of community gardens

—The mowing crew coordinated by Joe Masonick



## DECEMBER 5 IS PANTRY SUNDAY

A long list of products are needed by the All People's Inter-Faith Pantry this holiday season.

The Pantry staff has requested the following non-food items:

- toilet paper,
- bar soap,
- toothpaste and
- dish detergent.

Food items they need are:

- soups with meat,
- tuna,
- juice,
- peanut butter and
- jelly.

They have no need for cereal at this time.

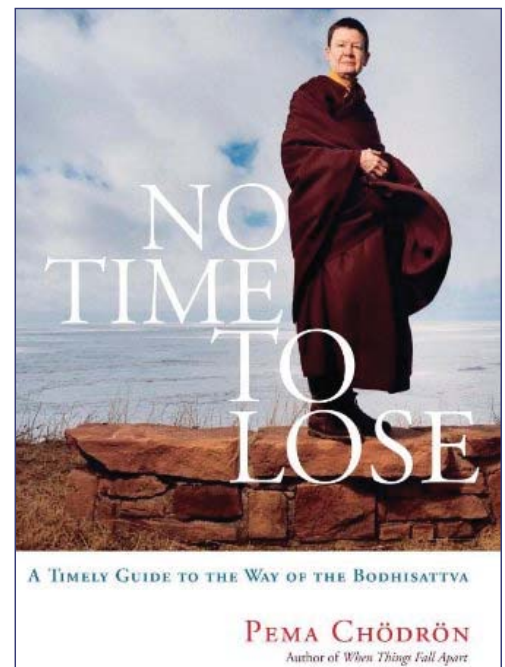
Please try to bring your donations on our Pantry Sunday, December 5.

## Invitation to Join the Buddhism Group

If you have been thinking about joining the UUCE Buddhism Group, now is the time. We will be starting a new book at our next meeting on Thursday, Dec. 2. The book is *No Time to Lose: A Timely Guide to the Way of the Bodhisattva*. This is essentially a guidebook for living the Buddhist path. Pema Chödrön, an American woman and ordained Buddhist nun, provides guidance on how to develop compassion in ourselves so that we can act to make the world a better place.

The Buddhism Group meets at the church in room 302 on Thursdays from 6:45 to 9:15 pm. The first hour is devoted to meditation, followed by the Dharma discussion.

Questions may be directed to Dave Zobott or Andrea Schmidlin.



# Happy Birthday to You!

## DECEMBER

3	Bob Sandidge	12	Kurt Wachholder	23	Hannah Day
4	Tim King	14	Jennifer Day	24	Teresa Stultz
6	Rusty Winchel	15	Kassia Lesiewicz	24	David Nunes (Caruso)
7	Linda Porter	15	Meg (TianTian) Laflin	27	Marilyn Hendry
7	Mike Moutrie	19	Ethan Fincher	27	Avery Bedard
10	Kole Talaga	20	Roberta Nauman	30	Doug Pratt
11	Paul Hanifl	20	Barbara Sugden	31	Ed Wall
11	Jim Bottino	20	Maxine Saunders		

## UUCE Readers

Afternoon Book Group will meet at 12:30 on Monday, December 27, at the home of Alice Macy to discuss *The Ha-Ha* by Dave King.

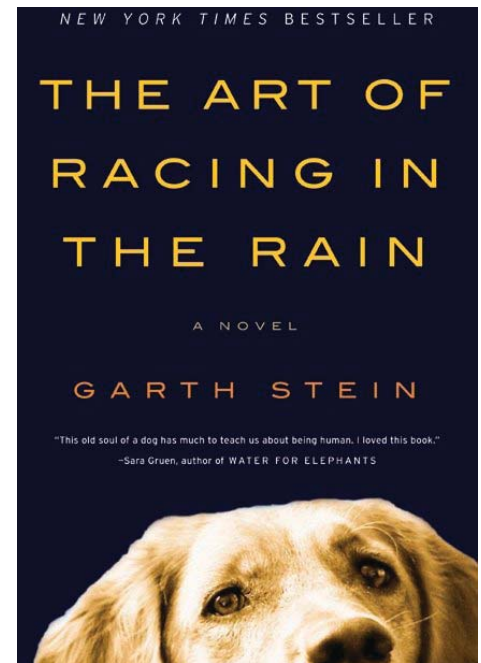
Evening Book Group will meet at 7:00 on Monday, December 20, at the home of Marilyn Wroblewski to discuss *The Art of Racing in the Rain* by Garth Stein. (Due to the holidays, the meeting is being held on a Monday, but will return to Friday in January.) New members are welcomed. Contact Beth Cooper-Zobott at [bcooper-zobott@eqrworld.com](mailto:bcooper-zobott@eqrworld.com).

## SOCIAL JUSTICE NOTES

The final tally of moneys collected for the 2010 CROP Walk is \$2,127! We raised, by far, the largest amount for the Elgin Walk on the online donation system. We will have an idea of how much the Elgin Walk earned in total early next year. Thanks again to all who participated!

The Social Justice Council is gearing up to participate in the commenting and voting phase of the Unitarian Universalist Association's 4-year Congregational Study/Action Issue on Ethical Eating:

Food and Environmental Justice. The UUA's Committee on Social Witness has put together a draft **Statement of Conscience**. The purpose of the commenting and voting phase is for congregations to have the opportunity to amend or affirm this draft, in order to place it on the agenda for the 2011 General Assembly. As part of this process, we are looking at conducting a number of events, including a possible Religious Exploration and Education class on Food Justice, and/or hosting a dinner/movie night. The deadline for voting on



the Statement of Conscience is soon—**February 1, 2011**, and so notices on these events will happen rapidly as well. Please watch the weekly church announcements and e-lists for more information as it becomes available, and read the **Statement of Conscience** on the UUA website. If you have an interest or passion for food & environmental justice, please contact Anne Ward, Melissa Owens, Mary Alice Masonick, Jorie Von Ohlen, or Dan Brosier for ways to get involved.

—UUCE Social Justice Council

## Ways to Get in Touch

### WEBSITE

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

### E-MAIL

[minister@uuce.org](mailto:minister@uuce.org)

[administrator@uuce.org](mailto:administrator@uuce.org)

[newsletter@uuce.org](mailto:newsletter@uuce.org)

### PHONE

847-888-0668

### PHYSICAL LOCATION

39W830 Highland Avenue  
*three miles west of Randall Rd.*

### POSTAL MAIL

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## The Unitarian Universalist Church of Elgin

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