



A·L·U·U·C FOCUS

FEBRUARY 2008



745 Woodside Road
Springfield, Illinois 62711
217-585-9550
www.aluuc.org

Abraham Lincoln
Unitarian Universalist Congregation

Office Hours:
Monday & Friday
11:00am to 2:30pm
Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday
11:00am to 5:00pm

SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES

Services are held Sunday morning at 10:30am. Religious education and child care are provided for children of all ages.

February 3

"Marching to the Beat of Your Own Drum"

A panel discussion by the ALUUC Sr. Youth

This service is created and led by our very own Sr. Youth. They will explore the topic of peer relations in a world that many times only hears one drum. How do our UU Youth maneuver through that world? What skills and tools do they need to feel confident in being a voice for change? What do they need from their church family to help them in the quest for a "free and open search for truth, to find the way to go." (This is a Change for Change Sunday)

February 10

Celebrating Our Heritage by Rev. Martin Woulfe

This week marks the 55th anniversary of the founding of the "Unitarian Fellowship, Abraham Lincoln" in Springfield. In this service we will consider the contributions of our members as well as the legacy of this congregation.

February 17

The Ongoing Religious Battle for Same Sex Marriages by Rev. Martin Woulfe

Four years ago, the issue of same sex weddings came to the fore of the nation's consciousness. What is the current debate and what are the religious implications?

February 24

Zen & the Art of Shooting by Rev. Martin Woulfe

Some folks raise their eyebrows when they hear that a UU minister has a keen interest in firearms and shooting competitions. In this service, Rev. Woulfe will explore how his hobby is a form of religious discipline.

March 2

"Create Beauty -- Throw It Away -- Create More"

A service featuring the performing and visual arts of congregation members and friends is coordinated by Delinda Chapman and Penny Wollan-Kriel. (This is a Change for Change Sunday)

What is Change for Change?

On "Change for Change Sundays," we take a special collection during the service. Half of the money collected helps support the general mission of ALUUC; the other half is used to support various Social Justice Initiatives of the congregation. Past beneficiaries have included the Springfield Overflow Shelter and Peace Camp.

From the Minister. . .

Leap Day

It's a given that 25% of all sermons presented nationwide this month will be entitled "Leap(s) of Faith" (the percentage being somewhat skewed by newly minted clergy). This concurrence stems from the fact that this particular February contains an extra day, in keeping with the dictates of the Gregorian calendar. One may well wonder why the crafters of the Gregorian system preferred to add an extra day to February rather than, say, May or June. I suspect that the answer may reveal that they were in the employ of the church and that they lived in a milder Italian clime.

In any event, we all have an extra day on our hands. The obvious question to ask therefore is: will it be an extra day to endure, or an opportunity to create a transformation? In short, a burden or a gift? Minute by minute, hour by hour – our habits shape our days, which in turn shape our seasons, and ultimately, our destiny. Will there be a balance of chores and dreams, fear and confessing, doubt and blessing?

If time permits, I recommend watching the film *Groundhog Day*. As you may know, the main character is caught in a seemingly endless loop. That recurring day, repeated ad nauseum, is in effect a gateway to self-discovery. But oh, ever so gradually. One wonders whether the loop lasts months or even years. The main character pursues every whim yet finds ultimately that they do not satisfy his deepest needs. Hence, *Groundhog Day* is an old fashioned morality tale, about a human being coming to terms with the nature and value of the transient v. the permanent.

Come then, leap month, come then leap day. As we stand in the proverbial stream of life, panning as it were through our thoughts and our habits, may we recognize the small golden flecks of our existence from the refuse – and then share the former with our companions.

~ *Martin*

From the Board Treasurer. . .

The pledge reminder letter sent out in December received a great response, as you can see below. A big "Thank You!" to everyone. Those who made a contribution during 2007 (calendar year) should have received or will soon receive a summary that can be used for tax purposes.

Following is a summary of our December income

Pledge payments	\$ 21,689.75
Plate collection cash	\$ 454.37
Other Income	\$ 1,551.26

Also, please remember that all checks are issued on (about) the 15th and the end of the month. Check requests should be submitted by the 10th and the 24th respectively. If you have a payment to make between these dates, please plan ahead and get your check in early. Thank you for your cooperation.

~ *Ken Wade*

From the Board President. . .

As the first month of 2008 comes to a close and this calendar year gets underway, I realize that the end of our fiscal year in June is looming closer. The end of June will also mark the end of my term as President of the Board of Directors, and I find myself pausing for a moment to reflect on the past year.

We have experienced the joy of seeing new faces join our congregation and the sadness of seeing long standing members leave us, either through geographical relocation, changes in spiritual path, or moving over the threshold from life into that great mystery of which none of us can know or understand.

We have also begun taking steps in making more growth possible in our congregation. We have extended our parking lot, acquired a wonderful office manager, and now have new hearing assistance devices to name just a few.

There is also the never-ending work of Board Members, Committee Members, and numerous volunteers doing what they can to keep all of this working and moving forward.

Even as one who considers his Higher Power to be more metaphor than anything else, I still must say that I have been truly blessed with the opportunities I have been given here for personal growth, as well as opportunities to give back to this congregation whatever I can in gratitude.

So, I look forward to the remainder of my term as President and after that to remaining a member of this wonderful congregation for many years to come.

~ *Mike Haynes*

From the Coordinator of Religious Education. . .

As many of you know, I teach at Washington Middle School, as well as serve our congregation. Wherever I turn, there are children to be taught, led, and embraced. During the months of January & February social justice is traditionally a curriculum focus. Personally, I relish the permission to discuss at length the topics of racism, sexism, political change, personal and group action for those less powerful.

Social Action is also an important part of our curriculum of religious education at ALUUC. Woven into each year, whether it's a World Religions year or a UU Principles year is the direct application of social justice work. Our littlest learners in Jane Joost's Pre-K class bring a quarter each week as they learn about how their donations will help a family directly through the Heifer International Project. The Sr. High kids have now become accustomed to working on social action projects at every district conference they attend. Most recently, it was heartening to see the cardboard boxes returned during the Sunday morning service for "A Guest at Your Table".

As we forge ahead into 2008, may we endeavor to keep the mission of social justice work in the forefront of our minds all year long.

~ *Meg Schnake*

Group Meetings

Book Discussion Group

The next meeting will be held at 7:30pm on Tuesday, February 26 at Barbara Moore's home. We will discuss "The Girls" by Lori Lansens. Call Barbara if you have any questions. Future books we will discuss include "March" by Geraldine Brooks; "The Life and Times of the Thunderbolt Kid: a memoir", Bill Bryson; "The Secret of Lost Things, a novel", Sheridan Hay; and "My Sister's Keeper", Jodi Picoult.

Bridge Group

This group meets at the ALUUC on the second Friday of every month at 7:00pm. Group contact person is Chris Romaine.

Build Your Own Theology Group

The next meeting will be held at 7:00pm on Monday, February 18 at the ALUUC. A review and discussion of the book How We Believe, by Michael Shermer, founder of the Skeptics Society and editor of its magazine, "*Skeptic*", will be presented by Berkley Moore. Shermer, who also authored, Why People Believe Weird Things, believes religion is a natural and useful component of human society, and unlike a number of other agnostics, holds that religion is not inevitably bad, but that indeed many promote much good. All are welcome!

Christian Interest Group

The next meeting will be held at 7:30pm on Monday, February 11 at the ALUUC. We will view a half-hour video presentation entitled "When is it Right to Play God?", given by several prominent liberal religious professors, then our entire group will discuss the video. The program will be followed by a Communion Service for those who wish to attend.

Dream Discussion Group

This group meets at the ALUUC on the first Monday of each month at 7:00pm. In a relaxed atmosphere, each person in the group will share a recent dream of his or her own choosing. Then two dreams will be selected for further discussion. It is an opportunity to exchange insights without engaging in group therapy as such. Contact John Glosser for more information.

First Friday Kids Club

This club meets every first Friday of each month, except in July & August. Children from Kindergarten through 5th Grade are welcome. First Fridays Kid's Club will be meeting February 1st from 6:00pm to 8:00pm at the ALUUC. We will be celebrating Ground Hog's Day! So come and see if we see YOUR shadow! A \$3 donation is requested to help cover costs. If you have any questions, please contact Marla Johnson at KidsClub@aluuc.org. An RSVP would be appreciated.

Humanist Discussion Group

The next meeting will be Monday, February 25 at 7:00pm at the ALUUC. Frank Kopecky will review So Help Me God: The Founding Fathers and the First Great Battle Over Church and State by Forest Church. A shorter version can be found in the UU World, Winter 2007 pp. 26-32 (also on the internet at http://www.uuworld.org/ideas/articles/50591_shtml). If you have questions about the Humanist Group, please contact Carol Floyd at HumanistGroup@aluuc.org.

Meditation Groups

Thursday Evening Meditation meets every Thursday night from 7:00pm to 9:00pm at the ALUUC.

The Sangamon Zen Group sits most Saturday mornings at the ALUUC from 9:30am to 11:30am. Please check the website calendar for dates.

News Covenant Group

The next meeting will be held at 7:30pm on Thursday, February 7 at Renata and Heiko Buchloh's home. Call Renata or Heiko if you have any questions.

The Occasional Choir

Check the online calendar for rehearsal dates. For more information about the choir, please contact Jim Redlich or Bonnie Ettinger.

Prairie Wind CUUPS Chapter

The Prairie Wind Chapter of the Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans is an eclectic Earth-centered spirituality group. They host several rituals throughout the year. For more information about the chapter, please visit www.prairiewindcuups.org

The 2008 ALUUC Membership Directories are in!

Members and Friends can pick up a directory at the ALUUC office anytime during the week when Rev. Martin Woulfe, or our Office Manager Cheryl Wycoff is there. Or you can pick one up before or after any Sunday morning service by getting with either Scott Wade or Jerry Zarley. There is a suggested \$2.00 donation per directory. Any questions or comments can be sent to Scott Wade at webmaster@aluuc.org.

ALUUC Workshop

In the month of March, the Membership and Publicity Committee will be offering a challenge to all members and friends of the ALUUC to join together in a Recruiting, Greeting, and Retaining Member's Workshop.

Participants in this workshop will come together for an evening of searching, learning and evaluating how the proven methods of other UU congregations might work for us.

The workshop will be held on Wednesday evening, March 26, 2008 at 7:00 pm

ALUUC Giving Tree

Dozens of hats, scarves and mittens were collected from the generous members and friends of ALUUC during the month of December. These items were used to decorate our beautiful holiday "Giving Tree" in the sanctuary and then donated to the adults and children staying at Contact Ministries and Helping Hands. Many thanks for your warmth and generosity this season and all through the year!

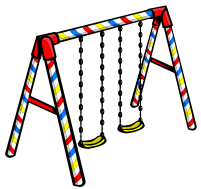
ALUUC Online

A new online communication tool has been added to the website for all members of ALUUC. This area allows you participate in forums, or create your own blogs, and it also has an internal email feature to communicate with others within the system. Go to www.aluuc.org, and click on the Members link. Scroll down to ALUUC Online, and click on the Enter Site link. You will need to click on the Join Today link to register and get access. Any questions can be directed to Scott Wade at webmaster@aluuc.org.

The ALUUC Playground

Welcome back to reality as we come rushing into this second month of 2008. The Playground Project has come a long way since last fall. **Saturday, March 15th** we will move to the *next phase* in our journey towards the elusive Kidtopia. The **Playground Planning Day** will include our last playground fundraiser. On this day we will begin the nitty-gritty of the project design. This playground isn't going to build itself. We have to start with a master plan and move forward from there. Our special guest will be Andy Hilton, a designer and project manager from the Learning Structures Company; a New Hampshire based family business that has been bringing communities together to build safe, state of the art, custom playgrounds for 35 years. He will help us focus and coordinate. What type of playground equipment would your kids like to play on? Bring them to the planning day so they can share their ideas with the rest of us. Besides voicing our component preferences, we will focus on our overall objectives and priorities. With this as a base and our budget in mind, Andy will walk us through our options. This exciting forum will be your chance to put the plan together for the actual playground. Our visions will soon come to life. The general consensus, so far, is that we prefer several interactive play stations rather than a generic mega structure. It will take some extra creativity to create a lasting playground for children of all ages, especially if we incorporate the seven principles as did the First Jefferson Unitarian Universalist Church in Dallas, Texas. Let's get some awesome ideas together and bring them to the **Playground Planning Day – Saturday, March 15th**. Details still to come.

Phillip Anderson, Playground Subcommittee



Potluck Sunday

With Valentine's Day we think of LOVE. With Presidents Day we think of our favorite LEADERS. With the Social Action Committee we think about what we as UU's can do to MAKE THE WORLD BETTER. On Sunday, February 10th, we will have a potluck immediately after Sunday service. This time we will feature the Social Action Committee, with its new chairs Rachael & Tom Zehr. We will share how all of us can pour our love into helping others in our very own community and in the world. We all have the potential to be like our favorite leaders and make this world a better place to live. Please join us on February 10th! Bring a tasty dish of food to share and bring your own ideas of what you would like to do to help make a difference. See you there.

Linda Haynes
Fellowship Committee Chair

Prairie Wind CUUPS Chapter presents...

A Renewal Ritual celebrating Imbolc

Saturday February 2, 2008

7:00pm at the ALUUC

Ritual leader: Buffy

Even though winter has us wrapped up in the cold, new life is stirring throughout nature. It is a time of waxing light and receding darkness. This is true for our own spiritual lives as well. What will you foster and develop this year? Take a moment for yourself and join us in a ritual to prepare for renewal and growth. It is time to dispense of the old and make way for the new.

What to bring:

A seasonal dish to share- dairy dishes (with milk, cheeses or creams), or anything that reminds you of the sun

Seeds and candles –have your own items blessed for the upcoming year

What to wear:

Whatever you feel comfortable in. We are also asking participants to wear something white (shirt, scarf, etc.) as a symbol of renewal and purification.

Small Group Ministry – Join Us!

We are just finishing up our “Planet Earth” series of discussions, and we are now looking forward to our next series. Starting in March, our focus will be “The Seven Principles” that are central to our UU way of religion.

Small Group Ministry has quickly spread throughout most of our UU congregations in the last few years. Most everyone who has tried it wants to do it again. Over a series of 8 sessions, groups of 8-10 people meet in casual surroundings to relax, get to know each other, and enjoy interesting discussions. A facilitator provides readings and questions which help stimulate the sharing of ideas, and the emphasis is on respectful listening. It is always amazing to hear how each person responds, and it is a wonderful way to start feeling deeply connected with others in our church community.

If you are ready to set aside a couple of hours every week or two to do something nice for yourself – to make a few friends and feed your spirit – check out our bulletin board in the hallway near the kitchen. If you want more information, SIGN UP on our clipboard over the water cooler, and we will contact you.

Gwen Childs & Brenda Wade
Small Group Ministry Coordinators

Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) Update

Donate to the UUSC-UUA Kenya Crisis Fund

The current crisis in Kenya is dire, and UUSC is mounting an urgent effort to respond. Your generous support will enable UUSC to direct assistance to those whose human rights have been further eroded. Please donate now to the UUSC-UUA Kenya Crisis Fund.

UUSC condemns the mounting violence precipitated by the electoral crisis in Kenya, and we are deeply concerned about the growing humanitarian crisis. Across Kenya, entire neighborhoods and villages have been burned to the ground. Sources report that between 485 and 600 people have been killed, numbers that are likely to rise once humanitarian aid groups gain access to remote areas that are currently restricted.

An estimated 255,000 displaced people have crowded into insufficiently equipped sites, without adequate access to food, water, medicines, and other supplies. Another 250,000 people who have not been displaced are in need of food, water, and other services. Kenyans still in their homes also are living with insecurity and many are afraid to leave; Kenyans report that people are being forced from their homes at night. Schools that were scheduled to open Monday, January 14, are full of displaced persons, and parents fear sending children to school amid the current insecurity. Many hospitals are overwhelmed with trauma cases and are running low on medicines and supplies.

Areas throughout the country are being strained by serious shortages of fuel, water, food, and other commodities due to closed ports and the paralyzed transportation system. Because Kenya also serves as the regional hub for trade and the flow of relief supplies, the growing crisis threatens vital humanitarian work in Uganda, southern Sudan, and the Congo.

In order to help us respond, UUSC asks our members and supporters to give to the UUSC-UUA Kenya Crisis Fund. Please help now! Members and supporters who would like to support UUSC's efforts to help the people of Kenya are encouraged to donate to the UUSC-UUA Kenya Crisis Fund online <http://www.uusc.org/info/Kenyaarticle011408.html> or by mailing checks payable to Kenya Crisis Fund to:

UUSC-UUA Kenya Crisis Fund
UUSC
PO Box 845259
Boston, MA 02284-5259

About UUSC (www.uusc.org)

With more than 47,000 members and supporters, the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee is a nonsectarian organization that advances human rights and social justice in the United States and around the world. Our programs are based on Unitarian Universalist principles that affirm the worth, dignity, and human rights of every person — but one need not be a Unitarian Universalist to join UUSC.


Through a potent combination of advocacy, education, and partnerships with grassroots organizations, UUSC supports programs and policies that promote workers' rights, advance the human right to water, defend civil liberties, and preserve the rights of those affected by humanitarian crises.

For more information about the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee

Contact: Deborah Cavanaugh-Grant, Local Rep at UUSC@aluuc.org

February 2008

* Event not held at the ALUUC

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						
					1 First Friday Kids Club 6:00pm	2 Zen Meditation Group - 9:30am CUUPS - Imbolc Ritual - 7:00pm
3 Worship Service 10:30am	4 Dream Group 7:00pm	5 Board Meeting 7:00pm	6	7 Meditation 7:00pm * News Group 7:30pm	8 Bridge Group 7:00pm	9 Zen Meditation Group - 9:30am
10 Worship Service 10:30am	11 Christian Interest Group 7:30pm	12	13	14 Meditation 7:00pm	15 Labyrinth Walk - 7:00pm	16 Zen Meditation Group - 9:30am
17 Worship Service 10:30am	18 Build Your Own Theology Group 7:00pm	19 Committee Night 7:00pm	20 New to UU Class - 7:00pm	21 Meditation 7:00pm	22	23 Zen Meditation Group - 9:30am
24 Worship Service 10:30am Movie Night 6:00pm	25 Humanist Group 7:00pm Newsletter Deadline	26 * Book Group 7:30pm	27 New to UU Class - 7:00pm	28 Meditation 7:00pm	29	

Dates & Times subject to change. Please check the website calendar for any changes/updates.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Clergy:

<i>Minister</i>	Rev. Martin Woulfe	minister@aluuc.org
<i>Minister-Emeritus</i>	Rev. Berkley Moore	minister-emeritus@aluuc.org

Staff:

<i>Office Manager</i>	Cheryl Wycoff	office@aluuc.org
<i>RE Coordinator</i>	Meg Schnake	CRE@aluuc.org
<i>Music/Pianist</i>	Bonnie Ettinger	music@aluuc.org

Board of Directors:

<i>President</i>	Mike Haynes	president@aluuc.org
<i>Vice President</i>	Gwen Childs	vicepresident@aluuc.org
<i>Treasurer</i>	Ken Wade	treasurer@aluuc.org
<i>Secretary</i>	Carol Floyd	secretary@aluuc.org
<i>Board Members</i>	Carley Mattimore Bill McCall Delinda Chapman Henry Farrington Ceceilia Haasis	

Committees:

<i>Committee on Ministry</i>	Rebecca Anderson	CoM@aluuc.org
<i>Endowment Trust</i>	Dave Braddock	Endowment@aluuc.org
<i>Nominating</i>	Roger Powers	Nominating@aluuc.org
<i>Aesthetics</i>	Deb Hagan	Aesthetics@aluuc.org
<i>Electronics & Communications</i>	Scott Wade	ECC@aluuc.org
<i>Facilities</i>	Kurt DeWeese	Facilities@aluuc.org
<i>Fellowship</i>	Linda Haynes	Fellowship@aluuc.org
<i>Finance</i>	Barbara Moore	Finance@aluuc.org
<i>Flower</i>	Vi Lanum	Flower@aluuc.org
<i>Membership & Publicity</i>	Renata Buchloh	MPC@aluuc.org
<i>Pastoral Care</i>	Jodi Perko Delinda Chapman	
<i>Program</i>	Craig Bailey	Program@aluuc.org
<i>Religious Education (RE)</i>	Brenda Wade	RE@aluuc.org
<i>Social Action</i>	Tom & Rachel Zehr	SAC@aluuc.org

FYI. . .

NAMETAGS

If you need a replacement nametag, please either email your request to office@aluuc.org, or print your name on a piece of paper and place it in the nametag slot on the nametag rack.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Change of address notices can be done by completing the ALUUC Membership Update Form found in the church office. You can also email the information to webmaster@aluuc.org or by mail to:

ALUUC Attn: ECC
745 Woodside Road
Springfield, IL 62711-7346

ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMING EVENTS

Submission for Announcements and Coming Events should be submitted electronically to office@aluuc.org no later than Wednesday at 12:00 noon.

NEWSLETTERS ON TAPE

If you would like an audio tape of the ALUUC Newsletter, please contact Jim Redlich. A cassette is produced every month and duplicates are available upon request.

NEWSLETTER OPTION

If you would rather receive this newsletter by email, please send an email to webmaster@aluuc.org requesting to change your newsletter option from mailing to email. Thank you.

*** Reminder ***

Please remember when participating in meetings held in the RE classrooms to clean up afterwards. We want our youth and our volunteer teachers to know that we value their efforts by respecting their space. Thank you!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Here are the names of members and friends who are celebrating birthdays this month. We have many new members and friends whose names possibly didn't get on the birthday list. If this is 'your month' and your name didn't get included, we're sorry. For future months, please email Scott Wade at webmaster@aluuc.org with the month of your birth.

- Gwen Childs**
- Wes Duiker**
- John Herron**
- Krista Kasper**
- Jack Kriel**
- Barbara Moore**
- Adrienne Powers**
- Mary Reed**
- Kitty Wrigley**



New to UU Class

Do you want to know more about Unitarian Universalism and what it means to become a member? If so, then this orientation is for you. Rev. Martin Woulfe conducts a class that presents the fundamentals of liberal religion and the history of this congregation. The class meets on two consecutive Wednesdays, Feb. 20 & 27 from 7:00 to 9:30pm at the ALUUC. Please let us know if you will need child care. You can sign-up by contacting Rev. Woulfe at 585-9550 or email minister@aluuc.org

MOVIE NIGHT

Come join us at the ALUUC on Sunday, February 24th at 6:00pm. Film has not yet been decided. Please check the online calendar at a later date.



ALUUC Membership Anniversaries For the Month of February

- Kelly Anderson (2007)
- Fe Paredes-Power & Bill Power (2005)
- Adrienne Powers (2001)
- Nancy Standen (2001)
- Tom & Rachel Zehr (2006)