



ALUUC Focus

Newsletter for the Abraham Lincoln Unitarian Universalist Congregation
www.aluuc.com



APRIL 2011

Worship Services are held Sunday mornings at 10:30am.
Religious education and child care are provided for children of all ages.
Large Print Bulletins and Hymnals, as well as hearing devices, are available upon request.

April 3 ~ Support, Educate, and Accept--A Talk on Autism and Neurodiversity Tami Watson

The mother of an autistic child, and researcher at Washington University working with families and children with autism, Tami will speak of her experiences and how they have enriched her life. This is a "Change for Change Sunday."

April 10 ~ Practicing What We Preach Rev. Martin Woulfe

UUs assert with confidence that we believe in "Deeds, not Creeds." On this "Justice Sunday," Rev. Woulfe will examine what justice entails and how our actions may or may not be expressions of creating justice.

April 17 ~ Religion & the Civil War Rev. Martin Woulfe

As the nation observes the 150th anniversary of the outbreak of the Civil War, Rev. Woulfe will explore how religion played a significant role in the origins and progress of that conflict. This service will include a child dedication.

April 24 ~ When Christianity was a Movement, not a Church Rev. Martin Woulfe

In this sermon, Rev. Woulfe will explore the changing nature of the religious movement that eventually came to be called Christianity. What was its original message, and how did it change – and why? How is it relevant to Unitarian Universalists today?

Member & Friend Directory

The 2011-12 edition of the ALUUC Member & Friend Directory is in progress and will be published soon. Please check your contact information on-line at www.aluuc.org and update it as needed. If you have a new or updated photo that you would prefer to use in the photo section, please either upload it online or send it to minister@aluuc.org. The last chance to have your photo taken will be after the service on Sunday, April 17.

745 Woodside Road, Springfield, IL 62711
217-585-9550

From the Minister...

I am intrigued with the “resurgence” of Universalism with in American Christianity. One recent book, entitled *Love Wins*, by Rob Bell has created quite a stir with its gospel that God’s love is infinite and that all people will be saved. I suppose that the publishers deliberately choose to release this book as close to Easter in order to create as much of a stir as possible: a good stir sells more books, after all. I have not read this book, but I suspect that its argument is based on those scriptural passages and logic made famous by our Universalist forebears during the 18th and 19th centuries.



Another prominent preacher who gained media attention after embracing “the Larger Hope” is the Rev. Carlton Pearson, a former Pentecostal bishop who had once been groomed for leadership by Oral Roberts. But at one point, Rev. Pearson embraced Universalism and was obliged to leave that ministry. Since then, Rev. Pearson has affiliated with the UUA and has forged a unique relationship with the UU Congregation in Tulsa. I would be surprised if you have not heard about him.

The belief that all will be saved is of course old news in our movement. An old saying is that Universalist church bells rang out “No hell, no hell!” in stark contrast to the decidedly more bleak tones emanating from the belfries of other churches.

One hundred and fifty years ago, Universalism was a significant religious movement in America; if I remember correctly, it has been estimated that nearly 800,000 Americans were Universalist Christians before the Civil War. Once upon a time, Central Illinois boasted many small rural Universalist congregations, including the towns of Springfield, Laomi and Decatur. Many of these congregations disappeared before 1900.

In fact, the number of people affiliated with the Universalist Church plummeted following the Civil War – by the time of the Great Depression, the Universalist Church was a shadow of its former self. What happened? I suspect that their loose organization and the lack of regular clergy were key factors – but an equally decisive factor was that mainline Protestant churches began to soften their views on hell, which stole the thunder (figuratively speaking) from the Universalists.

That trend – of emphasizing hope over hell – has largely continued among mainstream Protestants during the past century. Paradoxically, it has been those who have emphasized hell who have thrived in past few decades.

With that in mind, I wonder whether this “resurgence” will have any noticeable impact on American Christianity? Will only Protestants respond, or might some Catholics also move towards Universalism? I for one hope that Universalism does flourish widely, among liberal and conservative Christians alike. And what will be the impact, if any, within UUism?

It seems likely that more converts will, like Rev. Pearson, find a home here. If this does come to pass, it will be fascinating to see how Unitarian Universalism as a whole responds to an influx of Universalist Christians during its second half century.

- Martin

New to UU Orientation – Monday, April 11, 7-9:30 pm

There will be two separate New to UU Sessions this month. Each session is designed to acquaint new or prospective members with Unitarian Universalism and this congregation. Please sign up on for one or the other session on the form by the water fountain, or speak with Rev. Martin Woulfe or Membership Coordinator, Susan Solon.

From the Board President...

Thank you to everyone who planned, participated and contributed to another successful Fantasy Auction.

The 2011 Stewardship Pledge Drive began with a wonderful Canvasser Celebration organized by the Pledge Drive Co-Chairs Victoria Vincent and Carol Kneedler. I hope that everyone responds warmly and generously to this year's effort with strong consideration of the theme "Thank you for being here, ALUUC."

Once again, I applaud the activities of the Fellowship Committee Chaired by Randy Pratt, as well as associated volunteers, who have sponsored the monthly potlucks, game nights, the "Walk-and-Talk" outings, Circle Dinners, and who have provided the prep and clean-up every Sunday for the post-service coffee-hours. These are the events and functions that build and strengthen our church community. I hope everyone shares my appreciation and gratitude for this good work.

~ Kurt DeWeese



In accordance with one of the priorities of the ALUUC Board of Directors, I am once again providing the following special reminder about upcoming events of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA):

- **CMD-UUA District Assembly April 29-30, 2011**
The Annual Business Meeting and District Assembly of the Central Midwest District of the UUA is April 29-30, 2011 in Bloomington, IL. The speaker is Rev. Dr. Mark Morrison-Reed who will present "The Perversity of Diversity" regarding the challenge of embracing racial and cultural diversity within the context of liberal religion. The topic will be addressed further in a daylong workshop. There will also be an important discussion regarding "regionalism" in our denomination. Representatives of neighbouring districts, Prairie Star to our west and Heartland to the east, will attend the meeting. The ALUUC is authorized to credential 5 Delegates. ALUUC Members attend at their own expense. The agenda and registration information can be found at the following website <http://www.cmwd-uaa.org/> Please notify ALUUC Board President Kurt DeWeese if you are attending and want to be a Delegate.
- **UUA General Assembly June 22-26, 2011**
The Unitarian Universalist Congregations will gather in Charlotte, NC, for the 50th General Assembly, the annual meeting of the Unitarian Universalist Association. The meeting will take place in the Charlotte Convention Center, 501 South College Street, Charlotte, NC 28202. The General Assembly will formally begin Wednesday, June 22, 2011, at 7:00 p.m. and adjourn Sunday, June 26, 2011, at 6:00 p.m. The ALUUC is authorized to send 5 Member Delegates to General Assembly. Alternates may also be credentialed. Reverend Martin Woulfe may also be a delegate. Delegates must be voting members of the congregation; will be appointed by the ALUUC Board of Directors; and may be instructed about how to vote by the congregation, or vote independently. ALUUC Members attend at their own expense. Fifteen positions on the UUA boards and committees are open, but none are contested. A Statement of Conscience "Ethical Eating: Food & Environmental Justice" and proposed Bylaws and Rules will be voted on during the UUA Business Meetings. The tentative agenda can be viewed at the following website <http://www.uua.org/documents/gaoffice/tentativeagenda.pdf> Please notify ALUUC Board President Kurt DeWeese if you are attending and want to be a Delegate.

I call attention to the following 2 topics that are on the agenda of the UUA General Assembly (June 22-26, 2011) that has been developed through the Social Witness Process.

ABOUT THE SOCIAL WITNESS PROCESS

The Fifth Principle of Unitarian Universalism affirms and promotes the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process. In keeping with this, the way in which our denomination arrives at consensus on various social issues is by a democratically agreed upon process called the Social Witness Process, named as such because we bear witness to social inequity.

The Social Witness Process is facilitated by the Commission on Social Witness. It currently generates two types of consensus statements, Statements of Conscience, which result from study and action on a selected issue, and Actions of Immediate Witness. In November 2010, congregations had the opportunity to participate in a number of social witness decisions. A Report of the Commission on Social Witness was issued (February 2011) indicating that these and other social witness actions will be considered further during the 2011 UUA General Assembly June 22-26, 2011.

STATEMENT OF CONSCIENCE (SOC)

Issue: “Ethical Eating: Food and Environmental Justice for 2008–2012”

Religious organizations throughout the world have discussed the production, distribution, and use of food. Some people enjoy many food choices while others remain hungry. The food industry produces wealth, but small farmers and farm workers are often poor. Food production and transportation contribute to many environmental problems.

Background and Reasons for Study

Congregations can develop effective strategies to address two of the world’s biggest problems: social inequality and environmental destruction. This Congregational Study/Action Issue is inspired by the work of the several Unitarian Universalist (UU) affiliate and associate organizations that work with congregations in support of environmental justice.

Hunger is both a community problem and an international problem that can be approached in a variety of ways. There is a need for political advocacy in support of government programs that try to feed the hungry. There is a need also for involvement with service programs that deliver food to individuals and families - for example, Meals on Wheels programs.

Significance to Unitarian Universalism

Unitarian Universalists have a vision of environmental justice. One of our principles acknowledges “the interdependent web.” Others affirm the importance of human rights. Together our principles form one holistic statement that helps to define liberal religion.

Possible Study Topics

- There are different religious teachings concerning the production, distribution, and use of food. Why is food so important in religion?
- There are environmental concerns and concerns about animal rights and human rights. What moral guidelines, if any, should govern food production?
- Some people have too much food and some have too little. How should congregations address issues like poverty and hunger, nutrition education, and health promotion?
- What guidelines, if any, govern the purchase and use of food and beverages in your congregation? Do you pause for a blessing when you serve food?

Possible Actions

- Support sustainable agriculture and farmers’ markets. Encourage organic community gardening.
- Volunteer in support of community food pantries, Meals on Wheels programs, and similar projects that address the problem of hunger.
- Become an advocate for social and economic justice. Support labor unions, farmers’ cooperatives, “fair trade” associations, and other organizations that help the farmers and other workers who produce and distribute food in the global market.

The complete text of this Statement of Conscience (SOC) can be found at the UUA website <http://www.uua.org/>

DRAFT CONGREGATIONAL STUDY/ACTION ISSUE (CSAI)

Immigration as a Moral Issue

Delegates at the 2010 General Assembly in Minneapolis, MN, selected “Immigration as a Moral Issue” to be the 2010-2014 Congregational Study/Action Issue (CSAI) of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations. The Congregational Study/Action Issue is an invitation for congregations and districts to take a topic of concern and confront it, reflect on it, learn about it, respond to it, comment on it take action—each in their own way. A CSAI is NOT a statement—it is a question. The complete text of this Congregation Study/Action Issue (CSAI) can also be found at the UUA website - <http://www.uua.org> The Immigration Resource Guide for individuals and congregations, including the six-week Study Curriculum is also available at that site.

District Assembly 2011 - April 29-30

Fuzzy Aspirations & Hard Realities

Rev. Mark Morrison-Reed will be our Keynote Speaker in Bloomington Illinois at the Chateau Hotel and Conference Center

“Why has becoming more culturally and racially diverse been such a challenge for UUism? Why, when our intentions are so good, is it still a struggle? There is a surprising, and painful, truth behind Unitarian Universalist efforts to become more racially and culturally diverse. This truth must begin with taking an honest look at who we are and why we are who we are, and it ends in a conundrum but not without hope. If UUs really want to change, accepting the truth is the only place to start. Torn between our reality and our aspirations, what are we to do?”

This presentation will include viewing the DVD: *Black Pioneers in A White Denomination*, music and singing that explores what music has and has not appeared in UU hymnals over the last 50 years, small group discussion in which hard questions are reflected upon and a lecture based upon the findings in the Rev. Dr. Mark Morrison-Reed’s just released book *Darkening the Doorways: Black Trailblazers and Missed Opportunities in Unitarian Universalism*. In the end we will not only consider why achieving diversity is challenging, but also talk about which congregations have become successfully diverse and how.

Join Mark Morrison-Reed for an inspirational exploration of these issues, combined with worship, music and fun! Saturday will consist of two sessions with our keynote presenter, including some small group breakouts. An extended lunch hour will offer 2 one-hour informal sessions for affinity groups, workshop-type presentations, resource sharing, or browsing the UUA bookstore and district vendors.

Raised in the Unitarian Universalist faith, Mark was ordained in the Unitarian Universalist ministry in 1979. For 26 years, he and his wife, Donna, served as co-ministers--first in Rochester, New York, then in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Morrison-Reed’s graduate thesis, *Black Pioneers in a White Denomination*, was published in 1984 and is still in print. Now retired from full-time ministry, Morrison-Reed divides his time between writing and other interests. He has been working with Meadville Lombard Theological School to organize and build the library’s archive of materials relating to African American involvement in Universalism, Unitarianism and Unitarian Universalism and is teaching at the school on his research.

Be sure to make your room reservations for District Assembly by April 1. The best thing to do is to contact Angie at 309-665-5671 (corrected number) the reservations manager at The Chateau in Bloomington IL. Use discount code CMwD (or UUMA for ministers attending the ministers’ retreat). As of 3/24/2011, rooms are still available for April 27 through April 30.

Milestones

George Metcalf and Amanda Clark

were married on

March 19, 2011.

Congratulations!



A message from the Pastoral Care Committee:

The Pastoral Care Committee has added a new dimension to our activities: we have agreed to coordinate receptions at ALUUC following memorial services. We are now compiling a list of volunteer providers — people who are willing to bring in food, set up, and clean up on those occasions. When a memorial service is scheduled, we will contact people on the list and see who can provide something on that date. We will make every effort to avoid making multiple requests to the same individuals. If you provided something for one service, you should get a pass on the next one.

As we all no doubt know from experience, having food available following a memorial service provides an opportunity for family and friends of the deceased to share stories, laughs and tears.

Please consider adding your name to our list of volunteers. You may, of course, specify when you will be available, or in what capacity. If you can volunteer, please let Michael Plog know. You may contact him at 793-2509, at mbplog@comcast.net, or by letting him know in person after a Sunday service.

Thank you, on behalf of the Pastoral Care Committee, for your consideration of this request.

In Memoriam

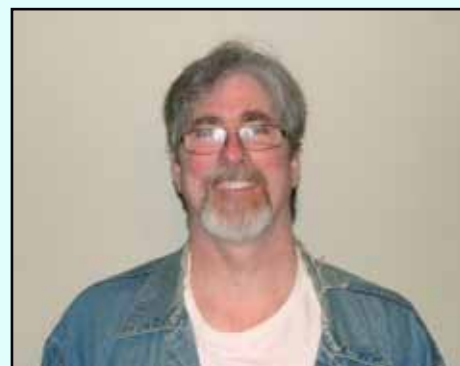
Anna Rose Redlich, 89, mother of Jim Redlich passed away peacefully on March 9, 2011, at the Northshore University Health System Hospice in Evanston, IL.

Ginger Huettemann, 58, passed away peacefully on March 25, at St. John's Hospice in Springfield, IL. A Celebration of her Life will be held at ALUUC on Saturday, April 2, at 5 pm.

Welcome New Members



Keith Boaz & Felicia Yates



Greg Greeley



Roger Ryan



Tim Kelly



Meet our New Intern, Lynnda White

Ms. Lynnda White will attend the service and potluck on Sunday April 10.

Ms. White is a resident of Peoria and a student at Meadville/Lombard Theological School in Chicago; she will be serving as a student minister at ALUUC during 2011-12 and a ministerial intern during 2012-13. Please be sure to give her a warm welcome!

Contact Information

CLERGY:			
Minister Minister Emeritus	Rev. Martin Woulfe Rev. Berkley Moore		minister@aluuc.org minister-emeritus@aluuc.org
STAFF:			
Office Manager RE Coordinator Membership Coordinator Music/Pianist	Cheryl Wycoff Marla Johnson Susan Solon Bonnie Ettinger		office@aluuc.org CRE@aluuc.org welcome@aluuc.org music@aluuc.org
BOARD OF DIRECTORS:			
President Vice President Treasurer Secretary Board Members	Kurt DeWeese Doug Liberati Victoria Vincent Carol Bailey Phillip Anderson Carol Floyd Chelsea Fry Brian Reynolds Roger Powers Cathy Talano		president@aluuc.org vicepresident@aluuc.org treasurer@aluuc.org secretary@aluuc.org
COMMITTEES OF THE CONGREGATION			
Committee on Ministry Nominating Committee Endowment Trust	Pending Appointment* Berkley Moore Jeffrey Bennett		CoM@aluuc.org nominating@aluuc.org endowment@aluuc.org
COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD:			
Electronics & Communications - Newsletter - Webmaster Facilities - Aesthetics - Flower Fellowship Finance Green Sanctuary Welcoming & Publicity Pastoral Care Program Religious Education (RE) Social Action	Jason Kluge Pam Daniel Carol Kneedler Kent Childs Renata Buchloh Vi Lanum Randy Pratt Meg Evans Michael Plog Jeff Bennett Dianne Roberts-Hill Deborah Cavanaugh-Grant		ECC@aluuc.org newsletter@aluuc.org webmaster@aluuc.org facilities@aluuc.org aesthetics@aluuc.org flower@aluuc.org fellowship@aluuc.org finance@aluuc.org greensanctuary@aluuc.org pastoralcare@aluuc.org program@aluuc.org RE@@aluuc.org SAC@aluuc.org

*Contact Office Manager for further information.

ALERT: All of the main locks for the ALUUC building have been re-set, so that those persons requiring access must determine if they need a new key, or arrange to gain access for occasional uses or special event purposes. Procedures have been established to formally authorize the issuance of keys. Please check with Rev. Martin Woulfe or President Kurt DeWeese regarding such authorization.

Change of Address or Email: Changes can be submitted by email to Updates@aluuc.org or by completing the ALUUC Membership Update Form found in the office.

Newsletter Option: To stop receiving this newsletter by mail or to change to receive it by email, please email your request to Pamela Daniel at newsletter@aluuc.org

Nametags: If you need a replacement nametag, please email your request to our Membership Coordinator, Susan Solon, at welcome@aluuc.org or print your name on a piece of paper and place it in the nametag slot found on the nametag rack.

Groups and Other Events

ALUUC CHOIR

Spring is a great time to sing with us in the choir! For the April 17 service, we will do a multigenerational song, (“The Garden Song”). Children who would like to sing with the adult choir that day, are invited to come to the 9:30 Sunday practices on 3/27/11, 4/3/11, 4/10/11, and 4/17/11. Parents need to accompany their child(ren) during the rehearsals. Come, join the fun! For more information, contact Bonnie Ettinger or Kathy McGuire.

BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

The Book Group will meet Tuesday, April 26, at 7:30 p.m. at Barbara Moore’s, 1800 Hastings Road. We will discuss “Adventures of Huckleberry Finn” by Mark Twain. Harold Beaver (in “Benet’s Reader’s Encyclopedia of American Literature) says of this book, “In the late 19th century the book offended the Northern bourgeoisie. By the late 20th century it offended the white South. By the mid-20th century it offended blacks everywhere, especially urban blacks. By the late-20th century it even offended urban whites.” Recently the book has been reissued with offensive parts changed from the original, thus creating a new controversy about it. We are reading the original version. Call Barbara if you have any questions. Future Books we will read include “The Book Thief” by Markus Zusak; “Dreams from My Father” by Barack Obama; “Can’t Wait to Get to Heaven: a novel” by Fannie Flagg; and “Maisie Dobbs” by Jacqueline Winspear.

BRIDGE GROUP

The April meeting of the Bridge Group, on Friday evening, April 15th at 7:00, is scheduled to be at the home of Barbara Moore. Call Chris Romaine to confirm that we will meet or talk to Barbara Moore.

CHILD DEDICATION CEREMONY

A child dedication ceremony will be held on Sunday, April 17 during the regular service.

DREAM GROUP

The Dream Group will meet on Monday, April 18, at 7:00 p.m. in the Emerson Room at church. This is an opportunity for folks to share and discuss dreams in a relaxed and informal setting. Newcomers are always welcome. For more information about the group, please contact John Glosser at 416-3398.

FLUTE CIRCLE

The Sangamon Valley Flute Circle meets in the Sanctuary on the second Wednesday of every month from 7 - 9 PM. Our next gathering is April 13. Anyone who has an interest is welcome to join us. No experience or flute ownership required.

KIDS’ CLUB

No foolin’! Kids’ Club will be holding it’s annual April Fools Day Celebration on Friday, April 1, 2011 at ALUUC from 6 pm- 8 pm. Please, RSVP to Marla at cre@aluuc.org

HUMANIST GROUP

The Humanist Discussion Group will meet on Monday April 25 at 7 pm in the ALUUC sanctuary. James Custer will review the book Religious Literacy : What Every American Needs to Know - and Doesn’t (by Stephen Prothero). Although the US is the “most religious” Western nation, Americans generally know little about the history of their own personal religion or other major world religions. Discussion will follow.

Background: (Prothero’s 7 page summary on why religious literacy is important) http://www.pewtrusts.org/news_room_detail.aspx?id=33494 (religious quiz questions— score and compare yourself with national sample) <http://features.pewforum.org/quiz/us-religious-knowledge/>

If you have questions about the Humanist Group, please contact Carol Floyd or email HumanistGroup@aluuc.org

Groups and Other Events

NEWS COVENANT GROUP

The News Group will depart from its usual first Thursday meeting date in April to meet at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 21 at Frank and Linda Kopecky's. This change from our usual meeting date is due to a conflict with the World Affairs Council's Great Decisions series. Everyone is welcome. Call Frank or Linda if you have any questions.

LABYRINTH WALK

Friday, April 15th, 7 - 9 pm

Come and experience the ALUUC Labyrinth and walk away from taxing events! Walking the labyrinth is an ancient practice, older than most religions and is a wonderful way to center yourself as this new season continues to unfold. Labyrinth walks have grown in popularity not only among UUs but among other faith traditions -- our labyrinth has been in use longer than most in central Illinois -- come see why. Adding to the spiritual depth of the experience, Carley Malan-Mattimore will be offering a Oneness Blessing to participants. This is a free event.

MOVIE NIGHT

The recent Academy Award winning film, *The King's Speech*, featuring best actor winner Colin Firth, will be shown at ALUUC on Sunday, April 17 at 6 pm. Refreshments will be provided. This is a free event.

SPANISH INTEREST GROUP

The Spanish Club will meet at ALUUC on Sunday, April 10 at 5 pm. Salsa Ambassador Julio Barrenzuela will teach the group some salsa moves! A pot luck will follow. All levels of Spanish speakers are welcome. Please sign up on the sheet posted by the water fountain.

THEOLOGIES IN DIALOGUE

The Theologies in Dialogue group has decided to take a hiatus for the 2010-2011 church year. We are interested in determining whether there is sufficient interest by a variety of members and friends of the congregation for the group to begin meeting again next September. Please contact John Glosser or Craig Bailey with questions or comments.

"NEW" COVENANT GROUP

Pat Goller is announcing the intention to form a new Covenant group. The name is negotiable, but will be limited to 8 to 10 members and includes the option to form another group if the interest is high.

BTW: Covenant groups involve an element of service to the congregation or community; this one will explore, among other things, cooking and food related topics. If you have more than a passing interest in exploring food related topics monthly with others, let Pat know.

PLANETary HEALing WORKSHOP

Rhiannon Gurley is holding a PLANETary HEALing workshop at ALUUC on Saturday, April 30, at 1:30 p.m. until 5:00 pm in the Commons area. Journeying and visualizing is a trance process, to which you need to commit yourself the entire time to delve into. A sliding scale donation of \$15-25 is requested. A flyer is posted on the bulletin board. Visit www.RhiannonsArbor.com for more info.

Prairie Grapevine Folklore Society

Traveler's Dream - Traditional Music at its best!

Date: Saturday, 16 April 2011 - 7:30pm

Donation: \$10 for adults, \$9 for seniors, \$8 for members, \$5 for students, \$25 for family
Traveler's Dream performs a spirited blend of traditional music from the British Isles, French-Canada, and America.

For more information log onto the Prairie Grapevine Folklore Society Website at:
<http://www.prairiegrapevine.org>

ALUUC Social Action Committee and Unitarian Service Committee (UUSC) Update

Fair Trade Products

The ALUUC Social Action Committee (SAC) will be selling Fair Trade products (coffee, teas, cocoa, and chocolate bars) the third Sunday of each month. The purchase of fair trade goods through the UUSC Coffee Project benefits agricultural cooperatives through UUSC's Small Farmer Fund. The UUSC Coffee Project is collaboration between the UUSC and Equal Exchange, a worker-owned, fair trade, company based in West Bridgewater, MA. Coffee from the UUSC Coffee Project is now being served on Sundays, following the service. Next sale date – April 17.

Change for Change

Thanks to the generosity of ALUUC members and friends, \$248.72 was collected for the March Change for Change recipient – The Boys & Girls Clubs of Springfield. The Social Action Committee has selected Senior Services of Central Illinois for the April Change for Change program. Senior Services provides older adults with non-medical services, which enhance quality of life and promote independent living.

Springfield Overflow Shelter Update

For the past five months (on November 7, December 5, January 2, February 6 and March 6) several members and friends of ALUUC have provided meals to the Springfield Overflow Shelter (SOS). SOS houses those homeless who do not have a bed in any of the other homeless shelters in Springfield. The volunteers for March 6 were Tom Clark, Jim Custer, Debby Hagan, Tom Vaught and Kitty Wrigley. Thank you to all volunteers and congregants who donated to the special SOS collections during these winter months. It takes a village. The SOS recipients have been very appreciative.

Devastation in Japan

While Japan's disaster-relief capacity is strong, UUSC stands in solidarity and sympathy with the people of Japan as they face the triple disaster of an earthquake, a tsunami, and the risk of nuclear meltdowns in four plants. UUSC has joined with the UUA to respond to this humanitarian crisis through the new UUA-UUSC Joint Japan Relief Fund. UUSC is engaging with the UUA to determine the most effective way we can support the Japanese people and how UUSC can best apply its expertise in the disaster response. You can monitor the situation through regularly checking UUSC's website. http://www.uusc.org/content/uusc_joins_uua_in_responding_to_japan_disaster

“Raise the Bar, Hershey” Campaign for Fair-Trade Chocolate

This spring as you celebrate Easter and Passover, UUSC encourages you to advocate for fair-trade chocolate treats. While many chocolate companies have taken steps to trace their cocoa purchasing, implement labor-rights standards among their suppliers, and introduce some fair-trade-certified product lines, Hershey is lagging behind. We can call on Hershey to end forced labor and child slavery in the cocoa industry by supporting the “Raise the Bar, Hershey!” campaign. The coalition behind the campaign has put together an Easter-themed letter to Hershey, an Easter-bunny coloring activity for kids to send letters to Hershey's CEO, and a list of fairly traded Easter-themed chocolate products. Find out more on our website.

http://www.uusc.org/blog/entry/2577/this_easter_and_passover_raise_the_bar_hershey

Social Action Committee Members include David Brunson, Bernie Carver, Deborah Cavanaugh-Grant, Vinnie Gupta, Teresa Liberati, John Malan, Sally Millichamp, Kim Nair, Brian Otwell, Neha Patel-Dunkirk, Susan Solon, and Doug Liberati (ALUUC Vice-President/Committee Coordinator and Board Committee Liaison). If you are interested in becoming a member of the ALUUC Social Action Committee, contact Deborah.

UUSC-UUA Japan Relief Fund

Thank you to all those who donated to the special collection on Sunday, March 20. All donations will be sent to a new UUA-UUSC Joint Japan Relief Fund to benefit the victims of the recent earthquake and tsunami disaster in Japan. Please visit the UUA's website, www.uua.org for more details about the UUA-UUSC response to this tragedy.

"Thank you for being here, ALUUC" Stewardship Drive

We're just about to wrap up this year's Stewardship Drive. We've had a great Canvasser Party, heartwarming testimonials, inspirational "thank you leaves", and we are hopeful we'll have enough money to support the congregation for another year of priceless memories for ALUUC Members and Friends and Unitarian Universalism in Springfield.

You can see the total of our efforts in the foyer of the church, along with pledge names by categories and thank you leaves. If you haven't already done so, we encourage you to pledge to the best of your ability -- and please don't forget to actually pay your pledge during the 2011-2012 church year.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the 2011-2012 Stewardship Drive. Whether you canvassed a friend, brought food to the Canvasser party, shared your gratitude on a leaf or pledged appropriately, we are grateful for your participation and support.

ALUUC and the people who make it a special community: priceless.

Victoria Vincent & Carol Kneedler
Stewardship Pledge Drive Co-Chairs

A New Adult Religious Enrichment Series Coming in May

Rev. Woulfe will conduct a four week Religious Enrichment class on four consecutive Wednesdays in May, beginning on 05/04: "Comedians & Spirituality in Cinema" During each class, we will view one film that features a strong religious theme and stars a well known comedian; the film will begin at 7 pm in the Commons, with conversation to follow. Come see them all or as many as your schedule permits.

The tentative schedule is as follows:

- 05/04: Robin Williams, "The Fisher King" (1991)
- 05/11: Ricky Gervais, "The Invention of Lying" (2009)
- 05/18: Bill Maher, "Religulous" (2008)
- 05/25: Steve Carrell: Evan Almighty (2007)

Please sign up on the sheet posted near the drinking fountain.

Fellowship Committee

The BIG NEWS FLASH in Fellowship this month is the Sustainability Retreat on Saturday, April 23rd. All members and friends are invited to attend for free. There will be many Sustainability workshop offerings and much more on that day.

Presenters who have confirmed as of the newsletter publishing date:

Linda Kopecky will do a workshop on the joys and benefits of gardening. Gina and Todd Austin will offer a workshop on family financial planning. Peggy Patty, will facilitate a workshop with new thoughts on recycling and the carbon foot print. Meg Evans will share her knowledge about starting and running a small business. Nancy Standon and her workshop participants will learn about homemade, frugal and delicious meal making while creating the retreat's participants' supper. Teri Freesmeyer, Springfield metaphysician, energy healer and coach will present a workshop on attracting prosperity into our lives. For more information or to sign up to attend: Watch the service announcements, ALUUC e-mail notices and ALUUC's website Fellowship page for more details as planning continues.



UU World Conversation Café: Tuesday April 19th, 6-8 pm, Channing Room: Is Unitarian Universalism a Faith for the Few? Randy Pratt will facilitate a conversation about the existence of elitism and class distinction in Unitarian Universalism. The discussion will center around two articles from the UU World Magazine, "A Faith for the Few", Spring 2011 and "Liberal Religion and the Working Class", Fall 2007. Refreshments will be served

Conversation Cafés are open, hosted conversations in a café-like environment. It could be at church, a café or someone's house—anywhere people gather to make sense of our world. At a Conversation Cafe there is nothing to join, no homework, no agenda, just a simple process that helps to shift us from small talk to BIG talk, conversations that matter.

Sustainability Weekend Kick off will be Earth Day, Friday, April 22nd with our second Coffee House and Open Mic. Scott Marlow and Mike Haynes are slated to perform. If you are interested in performing please contact Randy Pratt at fellowship@aluuc.org. You can also just show up and sign up to perform. Coffee, tea and refreshments will be served.

Walk 'n' Talks – Sunset Alert- This is your invitation to be part of the ALUUC's Sunset Watch. Your duties are minimal. When a great day is presented to us and there is a strong possibility of a great sunset, send out a message via email@aluuc.org, to meet that evening, 30 minutes before sunset at the Lincoln Council Ring in Lincoln Memorial Garden. Bring a poem, song, story, musical instrument to share if you so desire. You are on alert!

Circle Dinners: Thank you to Phillip and Tracy Anderson who hosted the first Circle Dinner on March 19th for 6 adults and 8 children. These dinners usually do not include children, so a special nod goes to the Andersons for opening their home. If you want to sign up to attend a dinner in April or May look for the signup sheet in the back hall above the water fountain or talk to someone from fellowship (Randy Pratt, Pat Goller, Diana DeWeese). Circle dinners are sit-down meals with ALUUC members and friends. Each participant contributes a side dish, dessert or something else specified by the host.

Potluck, April 10th: theme is "Spring." We are grateful for the arrival of warm weather, garden produce and the more active lifestyle that will follow. Got a "best" spring casserole, rhubarb pie, or healthy salad to pass and share? (March 13th After Sunday's Service: March's "Potluck of the Irish," was a delicious and wholesome meal with its many "Irish offerings." A special thank you to Kathy McGuire and Ed Schultz, who prepared corned beef briskets for all and everyone else whose contributions rounded our meal with an abundance of side dishes, desserts and bread.) Don't miss April's potluck;

Game Night, April 8th, 6-9 PM, Commons (Thanks to everyone who attend last month's game night especially Mike Haynes who facilitated and taught "Dungeons and Dragons" and the Bridge Group who hosted their monthly gathering at Game Night. They generously offered bridge lessons.) It promises to be another exciting game night in April. Join us with your favorite game. Pizza, snacks and beverages will be provided.

Fellowship Committee Continued...

Congratulations to Delinda Chapman for her abstract art show—Lighting Up Life—which continues at Caitie Girl's Restaurant's colorful space through the end of May. Thank you to those who joined us there on March 30th to celebrate the arts and the artist.



Thank you, as usual, to the many who contributed to our food celebrations after church, at game night, and at the Conversation Cafes. This month we are grateful to those who not only signed up for kitchen service, but to the many others, who often unnoticed, deliver their goodies to the kitchen or take out the trash, recycle, sweep, set up tables or clear dishes to the kitchen for those who are washing, drying and putting away things. Some noticeable contributors in March were Tom Vaught, Marla Johnson, Diane Roberts-Hill, Marissa DeWeese, Clara Lily White, Greg Greely, Tabitha and Melissa Bernhard, Susan Solan, Jim Custer, Mindy Miller, Fred Deitz, Jodi Perko, Victoria Vincent, Rob Ewart, Debbie Hagan, Margaret Demaree, Kim Nair, Dave and Caroline Brunson, and Kathy Talano.

A deep bow of gratitude to Kurt and Diana DeWeese who not only support most Fellowship efforts, but who will host game night in April and facilitate the pot luck on April 10th, while we are away for a couple of weeks.

Finally a special thank you to Mike Haynes who promotes Fellowship and other church activities through his e-mail alerts about what's happening at ALUUC. Peace and Fellowship to all.

Green Sanctuary Committee

The Grant for the Prairie Garden Restoration Project has been approved! Andrew Brunson and Becky Croteau drafted and submitted a grant request to the Illinois Native Plant Society which has been awarded. The Project can now move forward. For our next step, we must destroy life before new life can be sown. The foreign species of plants must be eradicated to make way for the rebirth of native plants which once covered these vast swathes of land. A trained and licensed herbicide applicator will be spraying the north east corner of ALUUC's grounds to decrease competition from the invasive species currently covering the area. They will spray early in the week so that no children will get the chance to play in it. The area will be marked. This process is the most effective and widely used within the restoration community to clear an area for Native Plants. The herbicide application is done by a professional because there is some hazard involved. There will be another application later in the year and then we will be ready to sow the native seeds, some of which Becky has secured. There will be a few seed collecting excursions throughout the summer where we can get folks involved. We are looking forward to including everyone in the planting of the seeds. The sowing process is a great chance to get our hands dirty together. The seeds are considered very precious by those who understand how rare they become with every passing year. Thank you for supporting this meaningful symbol of our beliefs. We will keep everyone posted as the project develops.

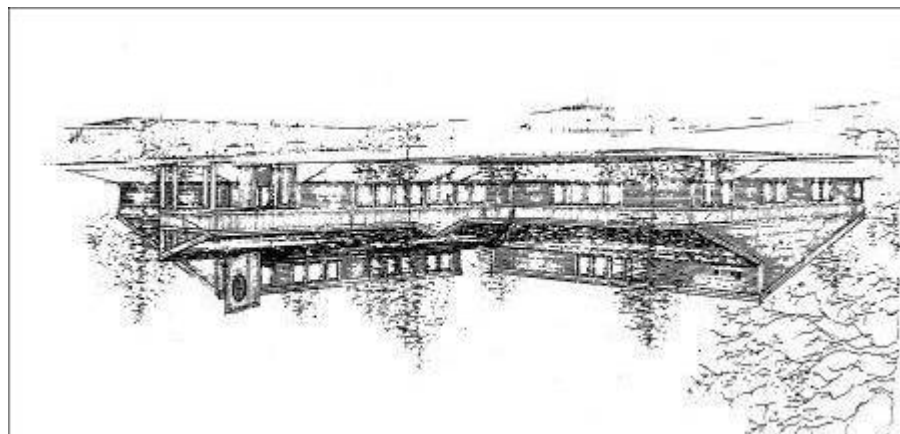
Thanks, Green Sanctuary Committee

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
<i>April 2011</i>					1 Kid's Club 6 - 8:00 pm	2 Facilities Work Day 8:30 am Zen Meditation 9:30 - 11:30 am
3 Choir Practice 9:30 am Worship Service 10:30 am Change for Change Sunday Senior Youth Group 3 - 5:00 pm	4	5 Board Meeting 7:00 pm	6 New to UU 7 - 9:00 pm	7 Meditation 7:00 pm	8 Game Night 6 - 9:00 pm	9 Zen Meditation 9:30 - 11:30 am
10 Choir Practice 9:30 am Worship Service 10:30 am Potluck 12:00 pm Young Adult Brunch - 12:00 Senior Youth Group 3 - 5:00 pm *Spanish Interest Group 5:00 pm	11 New to UU 7 - 9:30 pm	12	13 Sangamon Valley Flute Circle 7 - 9:00 pm	14 Meditation 7:00 pm	15 Labyrinth Walk 7:00 pm * Bridge Group 7:00 pm	16 Zen Meditation 9:30 - 2:00 pm Prairie Grapevine Folklore Society 7:30 pm
17 Choir Practice 9:30 am Worship Service 10:30 am Commitee Mtgs 12:00 Senior Youth Group 3 - 5:00 pm Movie Night 6:00 pm	18 Dream Group 7:00 pm Newsletter Submissions Due 9:00 pm	19 UU World Con- versation Cafe 6 - 8:00 pm	20	21 Meditation 7:00 pm * News Covenant Group 7:00 pm	22 Coffee House & Open Mic 6:00 pm	23 Zen Meditation 9:30 - 11:30 am Sustainability Retreat 1 - 10:00 pm
24 Worship Service 10:30 am Senior Youth Group 3 - 5:00 pm	25 Humanist Group 7:00 pm	26 *Book Discussion Group 7:30 pm	27	28 Meditation 7:00 pm	29	30 Zen Meditation 9:00 - 12:00 pm PLANETary HEALing workshop 1:30 - 5:00 pm CMD-UUA District Assembly

**Abraham Lincoln
Unitarian Universalist Congregation
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