



## Town Hall Meeting: Stewardship

**Help CCUU Be a Beacon for Today & a Blessing for Tomorrow**



**Feb 12, 10 am and Noon**

Join the Stewardship Team and Board of Trustees for an engaging and informative conversation about the reasons we all support Countryside Church UU. Treats, 2017-18 pledge forms, and information about supporting the solar panel project will be available. *Together, we ensure that CCUU is a Beacon for today and a Blessing for Tomorrow!*

## Stewardship Conversations

**Countryside Church: Beacon for Today, Blessing for Tomorrow**

Every year around this time, we hold a pledge drive during which each member is asked to reaffirm their commitment to Countryside Church Unitarian Universalist and to make a pledge of financial support to sustain this welcoming and loving community. We all know that Countryside Church is a place where we are free to explore and grow our mind and spirit; a community where ethics and compassion are more important than dogma; and, a place where we thrive on spiritual diversity. We find comfort knowing that here we embrace our differences; here we are united in the belief that each person's unique spiritual path enriches our shared journey; and, here a strong thread of humanity brings us closer to one another.

While recent political events have shocked our sensibilities and left us feeling uncomfortable and uncertain, for all of us, Countryside is the one place we know where we can go to join in community with others that share our common views and attitudes, to calm those feelings of discomfort and uncertainty, and to find meaningful and spiritually grounded action that we can take to address our concern for justice and compassion. Countryside is a beacon of hope for all those who repudiate the voices of hatred and bigotry and who stand more strongly than ever with the marginalized communities most vulnerable to the toxic message those voices spread. With our continued and generous financial support, Countryside Church can be a blessing to the future, ensuring that our core Unitarian Universalist principles live on for future generations.

Now more than ever, we need Countryside Church to continue to be a beacon of hope in the present, and now more than ever, we need Countryside Church to be a blessing to the future. For these things, we need your continued financial support – now more than ever.

We ask you to invest in your faith and your values here at CCUU. Generous pledges come in all sizes and only you know what size fits your means. You may be able to significantly increase your pledge – but it is stunning to consider what a difference we can each make when we join together. If everyone who pledges increased their pledge even by just \$8 per month, we would increase our resources by more than \$21,000, and if that increase were \$21 per month, it would increase our resources by more than \$50,000. A small increase can make a big difference.

With gratitude for your continued financial support of Countryside Church,  
 Gary LaBedz  
 Chair, Stewardship Team

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## Love Your Neighbor Vigil

**Building the Beloved Community and Standing in Solidarity with Neighbors of All Faiths and Cultures**

The evening will include a short service followed by coffee, tea, desserts, and conversation.

Sign up to bring treats to share:

<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040d4ea5ac2ca02-love>

**Weds, Feb 15 ~ 7 pm  
at Countryside Church UU**

## From Your Board of Trustees (BOT)

The last weekend in January was a busy one at Countryside, and one that offered many examples of what we have to offer to those who enter our doors on Sunday morning and of the importance of our presence in this community.

On Saturday, Jan 28, Countryside hosted a UU regional event, an all-day workshop on Social Justice and Religious Education. It brought together professional and lay leaders from many of our area UU congregations to share ideas, be energized by messages from regional leaders, and remind us that we are part of an active larger movement in a time of turbulence and change.

The following Sunday morning, our Study Ministry was highlighted during worship. We heard from two families who have found at Countryside a community that supports their spiritual journey and gives their children a place to grow. There are many opportunities here for deepening our knowledge of the sacred and the secular as adults. We are fortunate to have a vibrant Religious Education Program for our children and youth. Those of us who don't have children, or whose children are grown, gratefully recognize the difference we are making in so many lives through our support of our study programs. We make a difference in the lives of people in the larger community, as well as in our own.

Following the Study Ministry affirmation, we were treated to a thoughtful and thought-provoking sermon given by one of our Senior High Youth, Kadya Frawley. She reminded us how challenging, and yet how important, it is to live our UU values in a world that is changing so rapidly. Listening to Kadya, I was reminded that Countryside is a place where we bring our children, seeking support and help in equipping them with values and skills that will guide them into and through their adult life. I was reminded that Countryside is also a place where we ourselves come to be challenged to grow, to think, to support others in their growth, and to constantly evaluate what our values are and what it means to put them into action.

After the morning services, there was a potluck lunch and gathering of our Sunday Morning Teams. Sunday morning is the time when many of our members, as well as many visitors, come together in community at Countryside. The greeters who welcome us as we enter the doors, the ushers who help the service run smoothly, those that make sure we have coffee and tea for our socializing after worship, and those that run the AV system during worship – all are integral to the experience of Sunday mornings. If you missed this opportunity to join a team, please go online to Countryside's Sign-Up Genius or contact one of our Kinship Ministry coordinators, Tom MacTavish or Peggy Simonson at [Kinship@ccuu.org](mailto:Kinship@ccuu.org).

We see our mission as being open to diverse peoples, thinking and belief systems, and especially welcoming to those that may not feel welcomed elsewhere. It takes all of us to create the energy and welcoming atmosphere we want on Sunday. Each of us needs to be aware of those who are new to our community. Please

## From Your Board (continued)

take time each week during coffee hour to greet or engage in conversation someone with a purple or hand-written nametag. Bring them into conversations you are having, find out what brought them through our doors. Feel free to grab a board member or staff member to introduce them. Help us be sure everyone who comes to Countryside on Sunday morning feels welcome.

Our congregation is a vital part of the larger UU community, as well as of the community our building is located in. Our building and our staff provide a place for us to gather to support each other and to be in community with each other; a space for the many families that walk through our doors, bringing their children, looking for a place and a community to help guide them and enrich their minds. Our staff and our building provide diverse opportunities for each of us to grow, to share, to make a difference, but it can't be done without us, the congregation. There are many places to give of our time, our talent, and our financial support in the world. Very few of those places can match the immediate and substantial difference each of us makes in the lives of others, within and beyond our walls, when we support our congregation with our time, our talent, and our financial support.

Please feel free to contact me at [prez@ccuu.org](mailto:prez@ccuu.org).

...Karen Noorani



## In Sympathy

The sympathy of the congregation is extended to MaryAnne O'Dowd and her family on the death of her father.

## UUA Declaration of Conscience

Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) President Rev. Peter Morales and Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) President and CEO Hon. Thomas Andrews have issued an invitation to "all friends of faith and conscience" to sign the Declaration of Conscience, committing to put Unitarian Universalist values into action to resist hate, fear and bigotry.



You can view the full letter of invitation and the Declaration of Conscience on the UUA website:

<http://www.uua.org/pressroom/press-releases/calling-all-friends-faith-and-conscience-invitation-uua-president-and-uusc>

If you feel moved as an individual to sign, you may do so online at [uua.org/declaration](http://uua.org/declaration). The CCUU Board of Trustees will discuss action as a congregation at their meeting on Feb 28.

## Minister's Muse

I know that many in this congregation who attended the women's march felt a sense of warmth and solidarity – a joy – love – and real connection amongst the marchers. As I attended in Chicago, I surely felt it. A sea of kind faces of all ages, many races, varied identity groups, all along the gender spectrum, diverse religious traditions. March organizers requested us to keep signs positive – not about the man who is now in the White House but in favor of rights – including women's rights which are human rights. The signs were wide ranging: from giant art-quality vaginas to signs made by tasteful local artists, from angry and fist-pounding to love-testifying and affirmative, from global to local to the intimately personal, signs affirming the inherent worth and dignity of all people – beginning with children. There were a few signs against the man who's now in the White House, but they were, by far, a very small minority. It was an overwhelmingly positive, peaceful witness of love, principle, and a vision of the future that is both sustainable and sustaining.

In Chicago – like almost every other city the marches took place in, the organizers had underestimated the possible turnout. In city after city, marches had to be called off – out of concern for managing the huge number of people, and in city after city, the marches had to take place anyway since the swell of people walking anywhere turned into a march. The police responded with agility, helping to set up barriers, guide people along routes. Beginning early in the morning, I saw person after person going up to individual police and thanking them for their service to the city.

It was a brief day – a moment of respite from the shock and awe tactics of this new federal administration, which is making abundantly clear its anti-life (human, plant, or animal), anti-health, anti-freedom, anti-immigrant, anti-democracy, anti-compassion, anti-family, anti-science, anti-woman, anti-education, pro-racist, pro-greed, pro-corporatocracy – oy, enough with the list! – agenda. I'm bound by our non-profit status not to tell you who to vote for. I am not bound to be silent on matters of social/political importance – rather the opposite. A religion or pulpit that fails to speak on matters of social conscience is faithless and without principle or moral ground. I am bound – as are we all. The sea of signs spoke of the world that people of compassion, principle, and humility have been working toward for decades and longer. Yes, there is huge division. Yes, there are forces afoot with disproportionate political power. Yes, it's a time chillingly reminiscent... but the majority of people yearn for a more just, more democratic vision. Sometimes demonstrations are judged to be wastes of time – that they don't change the hearts and minds of those who oppress. They do something equally important and absolutely essential: they lift the spirits of those who long for a better world and are willing to work for it. They lift spirits and remind us that we are not alone.

Our first amendment guarantees us the right of free assembly -- a precious right in an open society. Such outpouring of good human will fills us all with strength and

breaks down isolation. It imparts courage and energy for the critical work ahead. Download a few pictures from the demonstrations and put them on your fridge or desktop. And remember every week, every day, there are people of good will gathering in a heartening community present and nearby – this faith community. Let us be among the mass of people who pour our strength into one another, who give one another support and companionship, and who remind us of the transforming power that lives at the center of our faith and our own spirits: the power of love.

...Hilary

## Like an Intimate Service? Come at 9:00!

Perhaps you've noticed lately that our sanctuary is getting quite full at second service (11am). All across the United States, Unitarian Universalist congregations are seeing increased attendance as people hunger for a supportive and sane community to help them map a way through challenging times.

It's good to see people come together instead of isolating. Still, our first service remains pretty small. The staff has been concerned about this, and various members of the congregation have shared their own concerns. There are advantages to a small service, and the staff has been grappling for some time with the question of how to attract more people to the earlier service and how to make that experience as rich and inviting as the second service.

The gift of the earlier service is that it can be more intimate. So we are going to explore some concrete ways of capitalizing on that potential for intimacy and connection. You may see small changes in the first service – seating arrangement, format of the service, a chance for more shared ritual. All of these will be experiments as we navigate our way to newer and more community-building forms of worship.

Some come on into first service – and remember to sit at the front of the sanctuary.

## Mark Your Calendar: Ordination of Ministerial Intern Eileen Wiviott

Please join me on Sunday, June 4 at 4pm at the Unitarian Church of Evanston for my ordination into Unitarian Universalist ministry. Ordination happens only once in the life of a minister, and our congregational polity gives the power to ordain exclusively to congregations. The Countryside congregation has been instrumental in my formation as a minister. I learn so much by being with you, worshiping and learning with you. It would be my joy to have you there to celebrate the moment that I cross this significant threshold into professional ministry. Please mark your calendars.

...Eileen

**Our worship and religious education program are on Sundays at 9:00 am & 11:00 am.**

Unless otherwise noted, young people in Kindergarten through Grade 7 attend the beginning of worship with their families; all other young people begin in their classrooms. At 9:00, we have classes for infants through Grade 6; at 11:00 for infants through Grade 12.

*NOTE: Announcements begin 5 minutes prior to the start of the worship service.*

**Worship descriptions are also on the church website: <http://ccuu.org/services/>**

### **Feb 12 Continental Drift**

**Rev. Hilary Landau Krivchenia**

Young people in Kindergarten through Grade 7 attend the beginning of the service with their families; all other young people begin in their classrooms.

Share the Plate: Half of the cash collected in the offering will be donated to Journeys The Road Home

After worship, please stay for Town Hall Meeting on Stewardship.

### **Feb 19 Defining Moments**

**Eileen Wiviott, Ministerial Intern**

Young people in Kindergarten through Grade 7 attend the beginning of the service with their families; all other young people begin in their classrooms.

### **Feb 26 Senior High Service**

Please join us as our high school youth group leads us in worship.

For the 9:00 service, young people in kindergarten and above attend the worship service with their families; infants and toddlers begin in their classrooms. For the 11:00 service, young people in grades 2 and above attend the worship service with their families; all other young people begin in their classrooms.

Share the Plate: Half of the cash collected in the offering will be donated to Northwest Cook County Sierra Club.

### **Mar 5 to be announced**

**Rev. Hilary Landau Krivchenia**

Young people in Kindergarten through Grade 7 attend the beginning of the service with their families; all other young people begin in their classrooms.

**\*\*Daylight Saving Time begins March 12 ~ clocks spring forward at 2 am.\*\***

### **Mar 12 Power and Privilege**

**Eileen Wiviott, Ministerial Intern**

Young people in Kindergarten through Grade 7 attend the beginning of the service with their families; all other young people begin in their classrooms.

Share the Plate: Half of the cash collected in the offering will be donated to Lawndale Christian Legal Center.

## **Youth Group Needs Your Expertise!**

March 24-26, we are hosting Spring Con, an event that brings up to 200 UU high school youth together to celebrate unity and love! We need your help running workshops of all kinds from peaceful meditation to talking about climate change—whatever passion you have that you could share with the youth community! Other volunteer opportunities include helping in the kitchen, set up and clean up, and overnight chaperoning. If you can volunteer, please contact Steve Black; if you are interested in leading a workshop, please contact Jeanie Michaliec. *Thank you for your support!*

## **Social Action**

### **Monthly Fair Trade: Feb 19**

Once/month we offer fair trade chocolate, coffee, tea, cocoa, olive oil, and snacks from Equal Exchange for sale. For each pound of Equal Exchange foods purchased, 20 cents goes to the [UUSC's Small Farmer Fund](#).

### **Next Social Action Meeting: Feb 26**

All are welcome to join us for the social action meeting in classroom 1. Please bring something to share for a simple potluck lunch (no nuts, please).



## **Come Sing with Us!**

If you like to sing and will commit to most of the rehearsals, please consider joining the choir. Rehearsals are most Thursdays 7:15-9:15pm; child-care can be provided. Contact Alison Vernon, [Music.Director@ccuu.org](mailto:Music.Director@ccuu.org) or 847-359-8440, X 5.

## From Our Director of Lifespan Religious Education (DLRE) Clear the Mechanism

This month, my husband and I are embarking on a 30-day meditation challenge along with 14,000 other people around the world and let me tell you, the timing could not have been better. Meditation is something I connect with the most as a spiritual practice. I can do it anywhere because all I need to have with me is myself. Sometimes I sit on my meditation cushion, other times I meditate on the train or in my office or during a walk. And then there are those special times when I am reminded of this practice- times when I find I have thrown myself on the floor in exasperation- figuratively and yes, sometimes literally. Times when I need to bring myself back to my breath. In one breath, I am reminded of this very moment- not the perseverations of yesterday or the to-dos and the grand plans of tomorrow. In one breath- I am in the here, the now. Always back to the single breath.

In the movie, "For the Love of the Game," Kevin Costner plays a soon to be retired pitcher that finds himself in the midst of a perfect game. He stands on the mound and the crowd is going wild. For him, his entire career comes down to this moment. He stares down to the batter and catcher, yet all he can hear is noise. He takes his throwing position, yet he is overwhelmed with the energy and the distraction around him. He says to himself, "Clear the mechanism." The distractions continue so he goes back to, "Clear the mechanism." He is bringing himself into what is known in sports as "the zone." The zone is a state of being that you can create within yourself so that you can achieve your potential, a place where even with the distraction around you, you are present with your mission, your truth of who you are and the direction you going.

Right now, our lives are overwhelmed with distractions. It seems that every moment we look at the news or check in on social media, we are bombarded with distractions and overwhelmed with the need to react. We are being told to look over here to distract us from what is going on over there. We are racing around trying to keep up with all that needs our attention. We are angry, at times fearful, and at the same time, committed to being a voice of resistance.

Unitarian Universalism calls us to be a voice for justice and in doing so, we must resist injustices. We can resist while remaining present with our mission and truth. We can resist and continue to build relationships with those around us – relationships that make us a stronger and more compassionate people. I whole-heartedly believe we were made for these times, Beloved Ones, and in these times, let us remain present and focused – returning over and over to our one united breath.

...Jules Jaramillo

## Why We Love CCUU

Like many UUs, our family first came to Countryside for our children. Oliver, our older son, had questions about why people believe and act the way they do, and while we had some answers, we knew did not have all of them. We only had one flashlight to illuminate one point of view on a complex and many-faceted existence. Countryside's Study Ministry has been the thing that gives us both perspective and community, bringing more lights to the facets of life and belief than we would ever see on our own.

Religious Ed classes are places where our children feel safe and heard. Rather than dreading a dull and judgmental Sunday school lesson (as some of us did as children), our children look forward to being in a place where they can breathe a sigh of relief, knowing they will be with others who agree with them on basic principles and will let them be themselves. They get to grow up knowing that if they have a question about their faith, it will be welcomed rather than brushed aside, and that is such a gift.

Engaging in the Study Ministry has been an amazing vehicle for examining our own beliefs and viewpoints, as well. Coming of Age is a group where you see kids critically think about the things you're telling them instead of just absorbing them, and you as a teacher are forced to think more deeply about your own beliefs. Some of our best discussions on faith both as a family and as a couple have been after a day when Joel has taught a class or had a mentoring session for the Coming of Age group or when we've been to a 20s-30s event. To engage in discussion and think critically through the Study Ministry is to live our 3rd and 4th principles directly—"acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations" and "a free and responsible search for truth and meaning," respectively.

Finally, we are so, so excited to be a part of the newest adventure in the Study Ministry, the Family Ministry! The goal of the Family Ministry is to strengthen the ties between the families of CCUU, better enabling us to live out our UU faith beyond Sunday mornings. We're looking forward to taking that Sunday morning sigh of relief and bringing it home with us, knowing that we'll be able to connect with other families from CCUU during the week. The desire to build connections and strengthen our values is why we came to CCUU, and engaging with the Study Ministry has been a great way to do just that. We can't wait to be a part of building this beloved community.

...Jackie Dennison

## New Family Ministry Team

Countryside Church has a new Family Ministry Team, whose mission is to create opportunities where in addition to children learning together on Sunday morning, families can also support one another to discover and rediscover a seeking, active faith in the context of our family lives. Family Ministry recognizes the entire family as being engaged on their own faith journey – caring and nurturing one another's souls. If you would like to stay connected, please join our closed Facebook group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1821210571463096/>

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It's one thing for a religion to offer you an identity; it's quite another for a religion to celebrate your identity. At our best, we UUs seek both.

The entire Soul Matters themed ministry program is about UU identity. Each month, we lift up a unique value or human quality that our faith calls us to live and lean into. Together, our themes tell us who UUs uniquely are. But that's only half of the equation. In addition to "UU identity," there's also "your identity." And our faith communities are just as committed to that.

In a sense, every UU congregation hangs two signs on their front doors: One that reads *Hidden Parts Allowed in the Open!* And another that says *Contradictions Welcome!*

We agree with Parker Palmer that our society has separated us from our souls. Indeed, the only relevant religions today are the ones that take this seriously. Hell certainly exists; it's the state of having to hide ourselves. And we also cheer on Walt Whitman's celebration of messiness and contradiction. We don't just want people to be honest about their contradictions; we want them to see those contradictions as great gifts! Bottom line: we want our congregations to be places where you don't have to pretend.

And it's not just the pressure to pretend that breaks our hearts. Our faith also worries about the way our culture urges us to live small. As social critic Courtney Martin points out, "It's never been more asked of us to show up as only slices of ourselves." The risk of this, of course, is that if we live too long only in our "slices," they become all that we are. There is no greater spiritual warning than one Kurt Vonnegut lifted up: "We are what we pretend to be, so we must be careful about what we pretend to be." Friends, this identity work isn't a game or merely a pas-time. It's unquestionably life and death stuff.

And here's the kicker: our faith wants you to stop hiding and live fully, not just for your sake, but for our sake as well. We are all struggling to escape our slices and connect to our hidden wholeness. Seeing you be real gives us permission to let our true self out of the dark! Your brave honesty about your contradictions allows us to proudly strut around in our multitudes! We save each other by being true to ourselves.

So this month, maybe those signs need to be hung on your own personal doors. Hidden Parts Allowed Out in the Open! Contradictions Welcome! No More Pretending! For all of our sakes.

*As always, don't treat these questions like "homework" or a list to be covered in its entirety. Simply pick the question that "hooks" you most and let it lead you where you need to go. The goal of the questions is not to help you analyze in the abstract, but to figure out what a deeper awareness of story means for your daily living. So, which question is calling to you and contains "your work"?*

1. Which of your contradictions needs to be celebrated as a wonderful multitude?! ("Do I contradict myself? Very well, then I contradict myself, I am large, I contain multitudes." ~Walt Whitman)

2. Is it time to pick a new group to tell you who you are? ("Who we are is a direct function of who we are with. We are relational creatures." – Rev. Kenn Hurto)
3. Has your struggle become your identity?
4. Is your identity longing for more alone time? ("Privacy is crucial to the sense of self." – Oliver Stone)
5. Have you thanked your wounds for making you you?
6. Have you become who you pretend to be? ("We are what we pretend to be, so we must be careful about what we pretend to be." ~Kurt Vonnegut)
7. Are you living only a slice of yourself? ("It's never been more asked of us to show up as only slices of ourselves in different places." ~Courtney Martin)
8. Are you not listening when people tell you who they are? (<http://www.oprah.com/oprahs-lifeclass/when-people-show-you-who-they-are-believe-them-video>)
9. What are you besides your work? (<http://www.filmsforaction.org/watch/who-are-you-this-breathtaking-video-might-change-your-life/#.vongql35h-3i.facebook> )
10. Are your Valentine's Day plans about more than filling your sweetheart's stomach with good food? Did you remember to make sure they also celebrate the part of their identity you love the most?

## Create Monthly Themed Art

Each month, we invite congregants of *all ages* to create an original piece of art that represents what the monthly theme means to you. We will display your offerings throughout the church building, protecting anything fragile in our locked display case. Any kind of art: fiber art, ceramics or pottery, metalwork, woodworking, paintings, photography, poetry, sculpture, etc.

The last Sunday of each month, we ask you to collect your artwork from that month and to bring your **original** art which shows what the upcoming theme means to you. Upcoming themes: March-Risk, April-Transformation, May-Embodiment, June-Zest. Contact Alison Vernon or Lois Phillips with questions.

## Open Forum Discussion

Forum meets each Sunday, 8:45-10 am, in classroom 5 to discuss "the issues of the day" while respectfully welcoming different perspectives. To be added to the Forum email list to receive supporting materials for the discussions, contact Vid Axel.

Future topics are tentative. The upcoming two Sundays are least likely to change, but current events developments or other factors sometimes inspire us to switch.

- Feb 12: a single, global time zone?
- Feb 19: Government and Us—is our government us? To what degree? What implications does this have for our responsibility?
- Feb 26: Money in Politics: Corporate Personhood and Career Politics
- Mar 5: Black culture, Police culture—why the conflict?
- Mar 12: Water, part 1: U.S.
- Mar 19: Water, part 2: Abroad

Rituals help us slow down, create a practice of mindfulness, and reinforce what is most important. We invite CCUU families to sit down together for a family ritual of sharing and reflection. Most of your children's spiritual and religious development takes place within your family and we hope to assist you to be more intentional.

We offer a simple ritual that includes lighting a chalice (the symbol of Unitarian Universalism), opening words to say together, some questions you can use for reflection and sharing together, and a unison closing. The theme and questions are based on the same monthly themes that are reflected in sermons, our small group ministry programs and our religious education classes.

Choose one or more nights each week to gather before eating dinner or at bedtime. We recommend the time you pick be consistent. The power of ritual is that it be predictable and regular. Feel free to adapt the reflection questions to meet your family's needs.

You will need a chalice, a small candle (it could be either electric for younger children or wax) and matches.

### **Unison Opening Words**

We are a Unitarian Universalist family.  
We are a family of open minds,  
We are a family of helping hands,  
We are a family of caring hearts.

Together, we care for the earth and all its creatures and we work for justice for all people.

### **Chalice Lighting**

Today we light this chalice to honor who we are and who we will become.

### **Reflection**

Our Identity is made up of who we are, what we do and who and what we love. Walt Whitman said, "I am large, I contain multitudes." It's like an onion, we have different layers that make us who we are. What are some of your layers?

### **Activity**

Interview a parent, grandparent or neighbor about their identity as a child or young adult. How did they see themselves? What were they proud of? Who did they hope to become? What was important to them? Did anything you learn surprise you? Do you see their identity in a new light now?

### **Unison Closing Prayer**

May we have eyes that see truth, hearts that love with courage, and hands that are ready to serve.

### **Reflection 2**

Our identity changes over time. As a child you may think of yourself as a learner, a sibling, a beginner at many things. And then as an adult you may think of yourself as a parent, a teacher. How do you think your identity will be different in 10 years? How do you think your identity will be different in 20 years?

(continued...)

### **Reflection 3**

Sometimes our family sees us one way and our classmates, co-workers, friends see us differently. How is your identity different in different groups? Maybe at home you help with the cooking and at school your kind of a clown.

### **Reflection 4**

We Are there times you don't t in with those around you? How do you continue to be your true self when you feel you are being pulled in different directions?

### **Activity 2**

Our identity can be shaped in part, by our family history. Do you know where your ancestors came from? Is there a nationality or culture your family identities with? As a family make a family tree.

### **CCUU Family Facebook Sharing**

What are other ways can you incorporate the theme of identity into your family life? What worked and what didn't work? How did you family discuss the theme of healing? Please share on the CCUU Families Facebook page.

### **Quotes on Identity**

*This above all, to thine own self be true.*

~ William Shakespeare

*Before I can live with other folks I've got to live with myself. The one thing that doesn't abide by majority rule is a person's conscience.*

~ Harper Lee

## **MidAmerica Regional Assembly**

### **April 28-30 in Oak Brook ~ Register Now!**

In spite of our small numbers in the national religious scene, Unitarian Universalists have been at the forefront of every significant social change in our nation's history. Now, more than ever, we need to work with partners to have an impact in our cities, states, and country.

Our Keynote Speaker will be Rev. Dr. Lee Barker, President and Professor of Ministry at Meadville-Lombard Theological School! Rev. Dr. Barker's topic will be *To Multi-faith: A Verb*. Unitarian Universalism is perfectly situated to promote constructive multi-faith engagement for increased understanding and enhanced harmony. We'll also have a forum with the UUA Presidential candidates.

Children's Programming is planned for ages 3-12. *Early bird registration and deadline for children's registration is April 5. Final registration deadline: April 21.* More details:

<https://www.midamericauua.org/events/regional-assembly/2604-regional-assembly-2017>

- Find ways for your congregation to put its faith in action.
- Ways to join with other faith communities or community groups to improve something in your locality.
- Share what you have learned about working with partners.

Plan now to join us there!

Faith rituals created at home help carry our Sunday church experience into the rest of our week. Countryside Church invites you to continue exploring the theme of identity throughout your week, exploring who you are, what you believe as Unitarian Universalists and how these beliefs are formed. The theme and questions are based on the same monthly themes that are reflected in sermons, our small group ministry programs, and our religious education classes. Create time and space in your day for faith rituals.

### **Light a Chalice**

Light your home chalice or candle as a daily ritual.

#### Chalice Lighting

I light this chalice to honor who I am.

I hold this light with me throughout my day.

Let it guide me into who I am becoming.

### **Reflection 1**

Our Identity is made up of who we are, what we do and who and what we love. Walt Whitman said, "I am large, I contain multitudes." It's like an onion, we have different layers that make us who we are. What are some of your layers?

**Activity:** Make time this week to speak to a family member, friend, neighbor or co-worker about their identity. Get to know them better by making space for them to share how they see themselves, what they are proud of and who they hope to become. Listen closely to them. Where you able to see their identity in a new light?

### **Reflection 2**

Our identity changes over time. Take time to consider how you saw yourself as a child? Were you a learner, a sibling, a caretaker and what were you a beginner of? As an adult are you single, in a relationship, married, a parent or a grandparent? What are you a teacher of and what are you still learning? After considering these, look to the future- how do you think your identity will be different in 10 years? How do you think your identity will be different in 20 years?

**Activity:** Create a timeline of your life from the beginning to right now. Mark significant events that have happened that has formed your identity. Mark how being Unitarian Universalist has guided you in your life. Can you identify ways that Unitarian Universalism could guide you in your future?

### **Reflection 3**

Take a few minutes to look at yourself in the mirror. Look deeply and consider what you see. What does your face look like when you are happy or disappointed? How do you show emotions of distress, compassion, anger or love? What do these reflections tell others about your identity?

**Activity:** Create a self-portrait (you do not need to be an artist for this—no one but you will need to see this drawing). Use colors that reflect your own identity. If you like, you can write captions on your portrait that also speak of who you are.

(continued...)

### **Reflection 4**

There are times that it may prove to be difficult to be yourself. We get very busy, distracted or our beliefs can be challenged by the world around us. How do you continue to be your true self when you feel you are being pulled in different directions?

**Activity:** Find a meaningful item that you can wear or put it your pocket that reminds you to connect to your Unitarian Universalist identity. Something that you can touch or see that will remind you to return to this identity. When times are challenging- hold it, touch it, look at it for a minute. Let this action remind you of who you are, who you are becoming and what you believe.

### **Quotes on Identity**

*Afraid that our inner light will be extinguished or our inner darkness exposed, we hide our true identities from each other. In the process, we become separated from our own souls. We end up living divided lives, so far removed from the truth we hold within that we cannot know the "integrity that comes from being what you are.*

~Parker Palmer

*One of the major shifts in human understanding has been a move away from seeing ourselves as solitary, independent agents in charge of our destiny toward a more complex awareness that who we are is a direct function of who we are with. We are relational creatures. Everything about us is shaped by our connections (or disconnections) with those around us.*

~Rev. Kenn Hurto

**Is This on Your Calendar?  
Music with a Mission ~ March 11  
You'll find the details on page 10...**



### **Transitions**

*The mission of the Transitions group is to provide a forum for mature adults to explore life transitions with a supportive community during daytime hours.*

### **Monthly Program & Lunch ~ 4th Thursdays**

We meet the 4th Thursday of the month at 10 am. Our program topic for Feb 23 is *Music and the Brain: Using Music to Enhance One's Mind, Body, and Spirit*. The program begins about 10:15 and is followed by a potluck lunch. Bring a dish to share or if you prefer, your individual lunch. Also, if you wish, bring a friend. All are welcome!

### **Memoir Makers: 2nd Fridays, 10 am**

Our next meeting is Fri., Feb 10 in classroom #1. In addition to sharing any new writings by members, we will continue viewing *The Art of Storytelling*. For more information, contact Tom MacTavish.

### **Great Books Reading Group**

We meet the 2nd & 4th Wednesdays of the month, 10 am-Noon. We began a new book of short stories in January. For info, contact Gloria Kinney.

## Intro to CCUU

**1st Sundays, 10 am & Noon**

Newcomers are invited to attend a brief orientation to Countryside Church and Unitarian Universalism on the first Sunday each month ~ following the worship service, in the Stokes Room, which is in the classroom wing, at the end of the main hallway.

## Atheist, Humanist, Agnostic (AHA)

**Discussion Group ~ 2nd Tuesdays, 7 pm**

All are welcome to join us in classroom 4. On Feb 14, guest speaker Melanie Terbovic will present *Buddhism as a non-theistic practice: Mindfulness and Meditation*.

## Mary Oliver Poetry Series

**4th Fridays, 7 pm**

For 2017, the Poetry Series is meeting on the 4th Friday of the month at 7:00 pm. Each evening begins with a Mary Oliver poem, then a featured poet reads his or her own poetry followed by an opportunity for audience members to read during an open mike session. On February 24, the featured poet will be Joe Calvillo, who describes his poetry as a voice for the muted, finding the dark in the light. The readings are open to the public, and all who love poetry are welcome. We hope you'll join us!

## Book Discussions

**Book Circle: Feb 19**

All are welcome to join us in classroom 6 on Sun, Feb 19 to discuss The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism by Naomi Klein. We gather at 6:15 and discussion begins at 6:30. We are always happy to welcome new people!

**Last Mondays Book Group: Feb 27**

All are invited to join us on Feb 27 at 7 pm in the Stokes Room to discuss Ready Player One by Ernest Cline.



## Wellness House

**Cancer Support in Palatine**

Wellness House and CCUU partner to offer cancer patients and their loved ones support services at CCUU. *The programs are free, and registration is*

*required. To register, contact Kelli Mitchell, 630-654-5197 or [kmitcell@wellnesshouse.org](mailto:kmitcell@wellnesshouse.org).*

**Support and Networking ~ Living with Cancer, Being a Caregiver: 1st Wednesdays, 7-8 pm:** Come together with other cancer patients and caregivers on the journey. The groups meet the first Wednesday of each month.

**Stress Management through Deep Hypnosis: 1st Saturdays, 10 am.** Hypnotism is used to promote healing, emotional resilience, and comprehensive stress management.

**Healthy Living ~ Mindful Yoga: Tuesdays, 10-11 am.** Cancer patients and their loved ones are invited to nurture your entire being with mind/body movement.

## QiGong Resumes in March

**1st & 3rd Tuesdays, 10:30—11:30 am**

**2nd & 4th Tuesdays, 7:00—8:00 pm**

Qi (energy) Gong (transformation) is a class that combines slow, gentle body movements and guided meditation. Discover your natural ability to heal yourself and others through movement and guided meditation to open your heart to unconditional love, kindness, and forgiveness. We're trying a slightly different schedule in hopes that more people can participate. All are welcome to join us in classroom 9/10 on 1st & 3rd Tuesdays, 10:30-11:30 am, and on 2nd & 4th Tuesdays, 7-8 pm.

## 20-30 Somethings

**1st & 3rd Sundays**

If you are in your 20s or 30s, please join us on the 1st & 3rd Sundays of the month at 12:20 in classroom 4. Child-care is available during the meetings. For more info or to be added to our email list, send an email to [2030s@ccuu.org](mailto:2030s@ccuu.org).

## 40-50 Somethings

This new group is for those too old for the 20-30s group but not yet ready to retire and attend Transitions.

At our kick-off meeting on Jan 15, we generated a list of possible activities; some people are looking for active, outdoorsy outings while others mentioned a desire for quieter events, such as dinner and crafting. The focus of our group is to socialize, and the meeting consensus was that we might do a couple of service projects each year, too.

Future 40-50 Somethings events will be scheduled for the 1st Saturday of each month. For more info, contact Mary Beth Van Wijk, or watch the Sunday Times and e-updates.

## Buddhist Study Group

**2nd Sundays, 12:30—2 pm**

We read & discuss selected Buddhist texts, practice mindful breathing & walking meditation, and strive to cultivate the capacity to be kind & compassionate and to bring joy into life. All are welcome!

## Feminine Divine Women's Group

**Last Saturdays, 9:30 am**

This year, we are reading and discussing Daring Greatly by Brené Brown. On Feb 25, we will discuss chapter 5. The group is open to newcomers. For more info, contact Wendy Ingrassia.

## Sacred Heartbeat Drum Circle

**Sat, Feb 25, 7 pm**

Adults and teens are invited to join us in Atherton Hall for free-style drumming in a low key, peaceful, welcoming environment. No drumming experience necessary! Please bring your instrument(s); some limited hand percussion is available to share. More info at [PalatineDrumCircle.com](http://PalatineDrumCircle.com).



**MUSIC with a MISSION**  
**Countryside Church's Music Outreach Fun Extravaganza!**

**2017**

**Saturday, March 11, 7-10 pm**

Do you have a secret desire to sing or play with the band? Or you just gotta dance when the music starts? Or maybe you just like to tap your foot and hum under your breath? *And*—do you love to open your heart in charitable giving?

Then don't miss CCUU's Fifth Annual *Music with a Mission* event! Bring your voice, your instrument, your feet, your ears to our open-mic evening of collaborative music-making. Gray Rock, our own "house band," will provide both entertainment and back-up for those who want to get up on stage.

MwaM's purpose is to raise funds for our local mission partners in a way that's lots of fun and easy on the pocketbook. There are several opportunities for charitable giving:

- \$10 minimum cover charge
- Beer and wine bar donations
- Request a song from the band
- Pay to play/sing with the band
- 50/50 cash raffle
- OR write a big, fat check!

If you want to sing or play *with the band*, or request a tune—Send title, music/chords/lyrics well in advance, so the band can play their best for you. And if you're singing and playing onstage solo or with a group, let us know that, too. Send email to [soundpro@gmail.com](mailto:soundpro@gmail.com). (If you're winging it at the last minute, bring six copies of lyrics/chords if you want the band behind you!)

Proceeds from *Music with a Mission* go to our mission partners:

- ◆ Partners for Our Communities (empowering people to help themselves and breaking down barriers to inclusion), [www.poc.news](http://www.poc.news)
- ◆ Faith in Place (empowering people of all faiths to care for the Earth), [www.faithinplace.org](http://www.faithinplace.org)
- ◆ Interfaith Committee for Detained Immigrants (helping those affected by immigrant detention), [icdichicago.org](http://icdichicago.org)

*Music with a Mission* is always a really rockin' good time for musicians, dancers, listeners—and for getting that warm feeling when you support the work of our church community and our service partners. Don't miss it!

## Upcoming Church Meetings & Events: February-March

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
This calendar shows upcoming Church meetings & events. All meetings and events held in the building are listed on the church website, under Events & Rentals - <a href="http://www.ccuu.org/programs-and-events/calendar">http://www.ccuu.org/programs-and-events/calendar</a> . If your meeting or event is not listed, please submit a room reservation form (available in the office or on the website with the calendar) to the office.						
<b>Feb 12</b> 8:45 am Open Forum 9 & 11am Worship & Relig. Education 10am & Noon Town Hall Mtg and Fellowship 12:15pm Path to Belonging #1 12:15pm Green Sanctuary 12:30pm Buddhist Study Grp	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> 10am Wellness House Yoga 7pm Atheist-Humanist-Agnostic Discussion	<b>Feb 8</b> Focus publication 10am Transitions Great Books Group 7pm Finance Ctte 7pm Beloved Conversations Grp	<b>9</b> 7:15pm Church Choir Rehearsal	<b>10</b> 10am Memoir Makers	<b>11</b>
<b>Feb 19</b> 8:45 am Open Forum 9 & 11am Worship & Relig. Education 10am & Noon Fair Trade monthly sale & Fellowship 12pm Coming of Age group 12:15pm Path to Belonging #2 12:20pm 20-30 Somethings 6:15pm Book Circle: <i>The Shock Doctrine</i>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> 10am Wellness House Yoga 7pm Soul Intentions Tues Cov Grp	<b>22</b> 10a-4p PADS Meal Delivery to Presby Church of Palatine 10am Great Books Discussion Group 7pm Beloved Conversations Grp	<b>23</b> 10am Transitions 7:15pm Church Choir Rehearsal	<b>24</b> 7pm Mary Oliver Poetry Series	<b>25</b> 9:30am Feminine Divine Women's Group TBA Circle Suppers 7pm Drum Circle
<b>Feb 26</b> 8:45 am Open Forum 9 & 11am Worship & Relig. Education 10am & Noon Coffee/Fellowship 12:30pm Social Action Mtg	<b>27</b> 10am Focus deadline 7pm Last Mondays Book Discussion	<b>28</b> 10am Wellness House Yoga 7pm Board of Trustees Mtg 7pm Experiencing God Cov Grp	<b>Mar 1</b> UUA General Assembly registration opens 7pm Wellness House support groups 7pm Outreach Steering Council	<b>Mar 2</b> 7:15pm Church Choir Rehearsal	<b>Mar 3</b>	<b>Mar 4</b> 10am Wellness House Hypnosis Group Midwest UU Youth Camp Reunion
<b>Mar 5</b> 8:45 am Open Forum 9 & 11am Worship & Relig. Education 10am & Noon Fellowship 10am & Noon Intro to CCUU 12pm Coming of Age group 12:20pm 20-30 Somethings	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> 10am Wellness House Yoga 7pm Ministry Council Mtg	<b>8</b> Focus publication 10am Transitions Great Books Group 7pm Finance Ctte 7pm Beloved Conversations Grp	<b>9</b> 7:15pm Church Choir Rehearsal	<b>10</b> 10am Memoir Makers 7pm Movies with Meaning?	<b>11</b> 7pm Music with a Mission

# Focus

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please call Ken or Rev. Hilary.

## Our Covenant

We unite to strengthen the bonds of kinship among all persons, to promote human dignity, and to increase reverence for life's creating, sustaining, and transforming power through worship, study, and service.

## Our Vision

We come together as a congregation to inspire our quests for the spiritual, ethical, and meaningful in life and to advance respect, compassion, and justice in the wider world.

## Our Mission

Countryside is seen as the growing voice and source of liberal religion in the northwest Chicago suburbs by...

- creating a place of inclusiveness, welcome, connectedness, compassion and respect
- providing for the spiritual and intellectual growth of members of all ages
- cultivating a vital future for our congregation and community through thoughtful stewardship of our financial resources and our environment
- acting on a social conscience

## Upcoming Focus Deadlines

Submit all articles by 10 am to [ccuu@ccuu.org](mailto:ccuu@ccuu.org)

- ◆ Feb 27 (to be publ Mar 8)
- ◆ Mar 27 (to be publ Apr 5)
- ◆ Apr 24 (to be publ May 3)

Between *Focus* issues, written communication is via E-Updates & the *Sunday Times* insert to the Order of Worship. Submission deadline for e-updates & *Sunday Times* is Weds at 9 am.

Return Service Requested  
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