Congregational Potlucks: May 5 and June 2

- May 5: our potluck will honor & celebrate our Coming of Age youth, who will be presenting their affirmations during service that day.
- June 2: a Congregational Potluck Picnic & Family Fun Day.

Plan to bring a dish to share. Sign up online to help with either one! [https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a044ea4a72fa13-monthly](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a044ea4a72fa13-monthly)

**Congregational Annual Meeting**

*May 19, 11 am*

The Congregational Annual Meeting will be held at 11:00 am on May 19, immediately following the church service. Childcare will be provided. The annual meeting is a gathering of the full congregation to hear updates on current programming and news about planning for our next church year, to vote on the budget and leadership slate for the upcoming fiscal year, and this year, to vote on proposed By-Laws changes.

- The leadership slate presented by the Nominating Committee on April 16 is included on page 4.
- The Board emailed an announcement about proposed By-Laws changes on April 22; you can view the proposed changes on the website: [http://ccuu.org/board-and-congregational-meetings/](http://ccuu.org/board-and-congregational-meetings/)
- Watch for the meeting agenda and final proposed budget to be emailed on or before May 9.

As stated in our By-Laws, Article V-2-a, *The right to vote at a business meeting of CCUU shall be reserved to those holding membership in CCUU for a minimum of 31 days; who have made a financial pledge to support CCUU in the current fiscal year; and, if a member for a year or more, have within the past 12 months made a contribution towards their pledge, or have been granted an exemption by the board.*

You are welcome and invited to attend whether you are a voting member, a friend, or simply learning more about Countryside Church Unitarian Universalist. It is a chance to witness our 5th Principle (the right of science and the use of the democratic process) in action!

**Flower Communion: May 12**

The Reverend Norbert Capek is creator of the Unitarian tradition of Flower Communion. His birthday is June 3, and many UU congregations, including ours, choose to hold their Flower Communion on the Sunday closest to Capek’s birthday. I treasure Flower Communion; it is a time I can make a small offering to everyone I can reach with a flower.

This year, though, we are moving our flower communion up to May 12. For those who are new, this special ritual asks that each person bring a flower or two to contribute to large congregational bouquets. During the service, everyone comes forward and receives a flower different than the one they brought, and in this way, offering a blessing of beauty upon one another.

Please remember to bring your flowers on May 12. ...Rev. Hilary
David Whyte, the poet wrote:

*To be human is to become visible while carrying what is hidden as a gift to others. To remember the other world in this world is to live in your true inheritance.*

What is the other world the poet is referring to? I don’t think it’s their heaven or a parallel universe—not exactly. But I think it is (at any rate, I interpret it as) the world of meaning and being as opposed to the world of busyness, acquisition, and habit. That world of being and meaning is often hidden in each one of us. Parker Palmer and David Whyte both think that hidden part of ourselves is, perhaps, shy, or if not shy, that it doesn’t emerge on demand and can be scared into hiding. A healthy congregation encourages each person to become visible, to “carry what is hidden as a gift to others.” When we’re young, we have a spark, a kind of inborn joy that, all too often, doesn’t survive— at least visibly— into adulthood. But it’s still there. That spark can energize us for an entire lifetime if only we know how to access it. I believe that healthy spiritual communities are intended to enable us to access that spark, life force, not only to bring us joy but to bring goodness into the world. I don’t think that accessing that spark is easy and that’s why we need spiritual community. That spark enables us to live in a hurting world in such a way that we can be bearers of healing and to face the hurt of the world and remain resilient. That resilience, of course, requires the support and encouragement of a deep community.

But there’s more in us that’s often hidden and can be a gift to others. Sometimes when we gather in a Sunday service, I’m aware of everyone sitting looking so “normal.” At the same time, I know that inside, every person is bearing their own share of struggle and difference, cleverly disguised. Sharing, speaking from our authentic experience, can be one of the greatest gifts we can give to others because every time we do it, it allows others to speak from their own authentic experience as well. While we all try to look so “normal,” we also miss the rich nuances of differences that could make our life together richer, deeper, and wider. We make assumptions when we meet other people. But what if we encountered one another with deep curiosity? Not prying—but with a gentle openness and interest that might allow every person to open up and reveal the best of what is hidden. We’re, each of us, truly unique. We each have that fresh-as-childhood spark waiting to be seen so that it can be free again. What might the world be like if we each had a personal spiritual practice of meeting everyone that we meet in that spirit of gentle openness and interest? Certainly, at a place like this congregation, we can practice, take that risk, loosen our assumptions, open our minds and hearts in fresh ways.

I’m thinking about this, in part, because it’s spring-time, time to open and blossom. I’m also thinking about this because, on May 18, is the annual conference of the Chicago Area Unitarian Universalist Council (CAUUC), which will be held at our own congregation. The core topic of the conference is going to be how are our congregations can learn to be more truly welcoming and inclusive so that we can share the warmth and freedom that is possible in Unitarian Universalism outside of the demographic that has been typical in our congregations. We live in a society that does not encourage us to reveal the sweetest, most creative, and hidden parts of ourselves—to become more visible. That’s a sad thing, but if we can gain that skill in our congregations, the love, welcome, and freedom that we learn can do more than enrich and free ourselves, enlarge our circle, expand our understanding of the varieties of human experience, and grow our faith. We will also gain the wisdom, skill, and power to ripple outward, to carry what has been hidden into the world so that perhaps, more and more people can grow into their own inheritance, as the poet says.

*Would you like support in Recovery?*

Recovery from addiction to or dependency on alcohol is a lifelong process that tends to go better with regular support. We intend to begin a recovery support program group here at Countryside Church Unitarian Universalist that is not based in the strong theism, for example, of traditional 12 step groups. This group will be strictly confidential and will meet regularly, beginning in September.

If you are interested in participating in such a group, please contact Rev. Hilary, minister@ccuu.org, or 847-359-8440 ext.2, and you will be added to the list.

*Special Announcement from the Minister*

Typically, in the month of July, I take time for study leave and some vacation time. This year, I am addressing some back issues by getting surgery. In consultation with the Board and Staff, we made the decision that I ought to do the surgery just after the Congregational Annual Meeting. The logic of this is that my recovery can take place during the less active months of the congregational year.

Already, Sunday services are nearly filled for June, July, and August, and I should be up and ambling by in-gathering. I will be available to the Board and Staff, as needed and able. In addition, I am arranging for a colleague to connect with our Lay Ministry Team to provide support for critical situations that might arise, though I would hope to be able to handle any unforeseen memorial services upon my return.

I look forward to my full time return in September, when I can work in greater comfort and we can embark on the adventure of our upcoming congregational year. I hope your summer will be meaningful and positive.  …Hilary

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*Intro to CCUU ~ 1st Sundays*

Newcomers are invited to attend a brief orientation to Countryside Church and Unitarian Universalism. It is offered the 1st Sunday of each month following either worship service.

*Path to Belonging*  
**June 2 & 9, 11:15 am -1:30 pm**

These classes are an opportunity to learn more about CCUU and more about the meaning of membership and to get to know others. Our minister, staff, and lay leaders provide exercises and opportunities to explore what you are seeking at CCUU and to discover the freedom and diversity of our faith.

It’s helpful to take both classes in the same session, but you can take one in one session and one in another. Sign up at the greeter window or email Tom MacTavish, Membership@ccuu.org.
From Your Board of Trustees

Our Annual Meeting is fast approaching on May 19 – and we need you there! In our UU faith, we are each responsible for sustaining Countryside through our participation in the democratic process. One of the privileges and responsibilities of being a member of Countryside is to have a voice and a vote at our Annual Meeting.

Our meeting will include updates on our ministries and programs, news about leadership and budget issues for the upcoming church year, and information about potential developments with respect to use of the North Property in a possible partnership with one of our service partners.

We will vote on the leadership slate for the 2019-20 church year, the proposed budget, and two proposed By-Law changes – one to reduce the age of membership and another to adjust the size of the Nominating Committee.

As mentioned in previous Focus articles and at the recent Town Hall meeting, we have committed to providing health benefits for full-time staff, including offering payment of 80% of the cost of premiums in a UUA health plan for our three full-time staff members. Accordingly, the board has approved an adjustment to the way in which we pay our UUA dues. More details will be provided in the Annual Meeting packet.

As in years past, along with the proposed budget, there will also be a proposed Reinstatement List, which includes a list of priorities to be fulfilled should we conclude the 2019-20 church year ahead of budget. We don’t consider these “cuts,” but rather delayed expenses since we aspire to complete the year ahead of budget.

At least 10 days before our annual meeting, all members will have available to them Countryside’s Annual Report and the proposed budget for the 2019-20 year. We ask that you please read through these materials in advance of our meeting so you come with the background information needed to ask informed questions, and after hearing the information we have to share at the meeting, you will be ready to make informed decisions.

Finally, as explained in the Message From The Minister, Rev. Hilary Krivchenia will be out on medical leave from May 20 to the end of June and will take July and August as her study and vacation leave, to continue postsurgical recovery. The board fully supports this timing for her to undergo this necessary medical procedure, and we will be available to support the congregation with its needs in her absence.

Please feel free to contact me at prez@ccuu.org. I am happy to sit down with any individual or any group leading up to the annual meeting that has questions or concerns.

...Christine Organ, Board President

From Our Interim Director of Lifespan Religious Education (DLRE)

It is hard to believe that the church year is winding down and summer will be here before we know it – which is hard to believe given the cool spring we’ve had! There is a sense of urgency to tie up all of the loose ends, especially given that it is still unknown, as of this writing, whether or not my time with you will come to an end in June or whether I will stay longer.

This year, we have had 10 youth participate in the Coming of Age program, and on May 5, they will be presenting the fruits of their labors during the worship service. This is a wonderful experience for the congregation as well as the youth. You will be amazed at their wisdom and perspective on how they see and walk in the world. After the service, there will be a celebratory potluck, and you can meet and talk with the youth as well as the adults who have been mentoring them along the way.

We will also be recognizing our senior high youth who are graduating at our annual bridging ceremony on May 19. Wherever life takes them next, we want them to know that we wish to continue to support them along the way, and that they always have a home here at Countryside. We are privileged to witness these moments in the lives of our Coming of Age youth and our graduates.

May 19 also marks the last day of religious education for the church/school year. We will have a three-week break, and start our summer program on June 16. Our summer program will be Passport to Spirituality, which explores the spiritual practices of religions around the world and how they connect to Unitarian Universalism. If this interests you, then consider being a helper on a Sunday morning. I guarantee that you will learn something new! You can sign up at https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0b45acaa2aaaaf6-summer1

A bit later this month on May 23, I will meet with the Transitions group to share with the older members of our community some of the trends we are seeing in our congregations and what this means for the future of our religious education programs and congregations. My hope is to have similar conversations with our youth and young adults. If my contract is extended into the next church year, then we will explore what direction Countryside wishes to go in the near future as you welcome a new DLRE in 2020.

And if my contract isn’t extended, then I hope to be able to work with the incoming DLRE to make as smooth of a transition as possible. It will then be a time of saying good-bye. Bittersweet as it will be, it will lead both of us to the next leg of our journeys.

In Faith,

Kathy
2019-20 Leadership Slate

Listed here is the slate of candidates put forth by the Nominating Committee for the upcoming church year and originally announced via email to the congregation on April 16.

The church membership will vote at the Annual Meeting on Sunday, May 19 at 11 am. The nominees, if elected, will assume their positions on July 1. These candidates were thoughtfully selected and recruited by our Nominating Committee, and we are confident that they will serve our church well, with both skill and compassion.

From the By-Laws, Article X-3: Additional nominations for all elected positions may be made by petition of at least ten percent (10%) of CCUU membership. Petitions shall be filed with the Secretary of the Board at least ten (10) days prior to the Annual Meeting.

Board of Trustees
Nominees for the Board of Trustees:
- President: duRee Bryant [1st year of 2-yr term]
- Vice President: Kathi Hillyer [serving 2nd year of 2-year term originally held by duRee Bryant]
- Secretary: CarolAnn Shindelar [1st year of 2-year term]
- Treasurer: Marcus White [1st year of second 2-year term]
- Trustee: Joy Simon [1st year of third 2-year term]
- Trustee: Vince Unger [serving 2nd year of 2-year term originally held by Jeanie Michalec]
- Trustee: Leslie Vaughn [1st year of 2-year term]

Continuing on the Board of Trustees:
- Trustee: Chris Hitchcock [2nd year of 2-year term]
- Trustee: Karen Epps [2nd year of 2-year term]

Endowment Committee
From the By-Laws, Article X-5: The Endowment Committee shall consist of five voting members, members of the Congregation, elected at an Annual Meeting of the Congregation for five-year (5) staggered terms such that one member is elected each year and no member shall serve more than two consecutive terms. Nominations to the Committee shall be made in the same manner as for members of the Board of Trustees. The Parish Minister and President of the Board of Trustees shall be nonvoting members of the Committee. In the event of a vacancy, the Board of Trustees shall appoint a member to fill the vacancy until the next Annual Meeting.

Nominee for the Endowment Committee:
1. Rem Stokes (1st year of 5-year term)

Continuing on the Endowment Committee:
2. Laura Corrigan (2nd year of 5-year term)
3. Mike Berry (continuing 3rd year of 5-year term begun by Chris Hitchcock)
4. Tony Prettto (4th year of 5-year term)
5. Lois Phillips (5th year of 5-year term)

Nominating Committee
From the By-Laws, Article X-4: The Nominating Committee shall consist of seven (7) members. Six shall serve for a term of two (2) years. Each shall be eligible for reelection to one (1) additional term. One member shall be appointed each year by the Board of Trustees to serve for a one-year term. No Nominating Committee member may serve more than four years of continuous service. Three members shall be elected at the Annual Congregational Meeting each year. The Convener of the Nominating Committee shall be selected by the President from those directly elected by the Congregation to the Nominating Committee.

Nominees for the Nominating Committee:
1. John Alton [1st year of 2-year term]
2. Barrie Burr [1st year of 2-year term]
3. John Evans [1st year of 2-year term]

Continuing on the Nominating Committee:
1. Jeff Phillips [2nd year of 2-year term]
2. Cheryl Stephanopoulos Murray [2nd year of 2-yr term]

We would like to thank those members who are completing their service for their commitment to the work of Countryside Church:
- Christine Organ, Board President
- Kristin Huston – Board Member
- Jeanie Michalec – Board Member
- Bridget Toth – Endowment Committee
- Debbie Lee – Nominating Committee
- Ryan Schaefges – Nominating Committee
- Karen Greenland – Board appointee to Nominating Committee
Upcoming Worship Services

Worship Services & Religious Education classes are on Sundays at 10:00 am.
Young people attend the beginning of worship with their families unless otherwise indicated below.
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/

May 5  Coming of Age Service
Our Coming of Age youth (grades 7-9) will present their credos or affirmations—their personal statement of beliefs—during this service.
This is an all-church service; young people in kindergarten and above attend the entire worship service with their families; nursery and chalice children will be available for infants and toddlers.
Share the Plate: Half the cash collected in the offering will be donated to Revolution Workshop.

May 12  Flower Communion  Rev. Hilary L. Krivchenia
Please bring a flower or a few flowers from home to share. A Unitarian tradition begun by Norbert Capek, the Flower Communion celebrates the beauty of our diversity and our hope for continued blossoming as a community of spirit.

May 19  Spring Mind Cleaning  Rev. Hilary L. Krivchenia
We will honor our Bridging Youth during the service.
Be sure to stay after service for our Congregational Annual Meeting.

May 26  The Art & Science of Talking to Yourself  Rev. Dr. C. Scot Giles
Our Community Minister leads this Sunday’s service about finding ways to take control over one’s motivation.
Share the Plate: Half the cash collected in the offering will be donated to NAMI Northwest Suburban, affiliated with NAMI National and NAMI Illinois, providing support, education, advocacy, and resources to those who suffer from neurobiological brain disorders and to their families. www.naminorthwestsuburban.org

June 2  Beloved Conversations  The Board of Trustees
Share the Plate: Half the cash collected in the offering will be donated to the UU Trauma Response Ministry.

June 9  The Board of Trustees
Share the Plate: Half the cash collected in the offering will be donated to Youth Outlook.

June 16  Karen Torres

June 23  Video of UUA General Assembly Service
Instead of live-streaming this year’s UUA General Assembly Sunday worship service (which is at Noon central time.), we will show the video of the previously-recorded Service of the Living Tradition, during which our own Alison Vernon is recognized for completing her UU music leader credentialing.
Share the Plate: Half the cash collected in the offering will be donated to the organization selected by the UUA.

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for a Great Seder

This year’s Seder was another rousing success thanks to the efforts of many, many volunteers. Many thanks to Carol Bobbe, who every year coordinates the Passover Seder with such smoothness that it goes off without a hitch. Thank you to Ken Bobbe, who, with Carol, handled the PR and the registration and coordinated all the key folks who helped recruit and empower still others to make this festive event happen:

- The 20–30 Somethings, led by Michelle Hitchcock and accompanied by many small children, came in the night before and with much joy and bustling (and pizza) and the help of some other volunteers, set up the space in Atherton Hall so that when we arrived on Friday night, the hall shone like a spring festival.
- Our kitchen team: Karen Epps, Linda & Mike Berry, Linda & Tom Kuna, and Susan Auld, who also helped with check-in
- Mark Krivchenia perfected a matzoh ball soup to feed hoards and also prepared the best noodle kugel tasted in my lifetime.
- Our ensemble of musicians—Jeff Oremland, Cathy Maraist, Mary Ellen Heelan, led us in the songs in exactly the manner that should happen at a Seder—informally and tunefully.
- The clean-up team, led by Edie Reese, stayed to make sure all was clean and bright when we finished.
- Everyone brought a bounty of food which was nourishing and Passover appropriate and desserts that fed both the soul and the sweet tooth.
- I am truly grateful to both Jeff Oremland and Edie Reese for their excellent Hebrew contributions as they co-led the reading of the Haggadah with me. Everyone seemed to bring their sense of humor and their joy in sharing this ancient ritual. The children that were present participated fully and looked for the affectionate with zest and found it successfully. As usual, I bought too many small gifts for children to take home in their swag bags—we’ll have plenty for next year.

All in all, the Seder was a beautiful and well-attended event that brought people of all ages together for an evening of ritual, storytelling, feasting, singing, conversation, and laughter. Thank you to everyone who participated and who worked to make the Seder the rousing success that it was! Hag Sameach.  

…Hilary
What does it mean to be a People of Curiosity?

UU minister Victoria Safford speaks of curiosity using the metaphor of perception and sight. She writes,

To see, simply to look and to see, is an ethical act and intentional choice; to see, with open eyes, is a spiritual practice and thus a risk, for it can open you to ways of knowing the world and loving it that will lead to inevitable consequences. The awakened eye is a conscious eye, a willful eye, and brave, because to see things as they are, each in its own truth, will make you very vulnerable.

Consequences. I’m not sure I’ve ever thought of curiosity in terms of consequences. But I think Safford’s got it right. There is a type of curiosity that is about enjoyment and adventure. It invites us to experience life as a playground. But there is another type of curiosity that leads to consequences, that changes us. This kind of curiosity is about more than enjoyment. Indeed, it’s the kind that drives us past enjoyment and comfort. It’s not about enriching oneself; it’s about altering oneself.

This is the type of curiosity we Unitarians Universalists have fallen in love with—one might even say, put our “faith” in.

Just think of how we talk about our dances with curiosity. We don’t just tell stories about barraging our poor Sunday School teachers with “Why?!” and “Who says?!”; We tell stories of doing it until we were kicked out of the class. We don’t just talk about being open-minded; we talk about how our open-mindedness led us to leave home and family and walk a lonelier path than we wanted. And lately, many of us have leaned into the hard work of being curious about our role in upholding institutional racism and structures of white supremacy, none of which is just about “learning interesting new things.”

The point of all these stories is that, as hard as these curious paths are, we are grateful for them. We don’t want curiosity to just be fun or interesting. We want it to make us anew.

In other words, the message of our faith is not simply “Be curious!” It’s “Be curious until there are consequences!”

It’s fine to be inquisitive for the fun of it. But at another level, we’re called to remember that curiosity is not game. Well, maybe it’s the greatest game. The one that drives us to constantly become more, for our sakes and for the sake of others.

~ Rev. Scott Tayler, Soul Matters Team Lead

Questions for Considering Curiosity

As always, don’t treat these questions like “homework” or try to answer every single one. Instead, make time to reflect on the list and then pick the one question that speaks to you most. The goal is to figure out which question is “yours.” Which question captures the call of your inner voice and what is it trying to get you to notice? Which one contains “your work”? Sometimes it helps to read the list to a friend or loved one and ask them which one they think is the question you need to wrestle with!

1. What or who has kept you curious?
2. What’s something you know now about being a person of curiosity that you didn’t know when you were 18 years old?
3. Has being curious ever come at a cost for you?
4. As you get older, are you more curious or less?
5. Are you regularly curious about what your body is trying to tell you?
6. Is that person who drives you crazy trying to teach you something?
7. Do you believe that every moment is a teachable moment?
8. Have you forgiven yourself for that time you willfully refused to question what you knew was untrue?
9. When it comes to you worrying about the future or being curious about it, which one wins?
10. Do you think you are worth someone being curious about you?
11. Which were you taught was more important: the “expert mind” or the “beginner’s mind”?
12. Have you ever opened Pandora’s box?
13. What is the greatest adventure that your curiosity took you on??

Our Soul Connections small ministry groups discuss the monthly themes, questions, and activities each month. For further info regarding the Soul Connections program, email Don Bussey, SoulConnections@ccuu.org

- Get daily inspiration on the monthly theme by liking the Soul Matters Facebook inspiration page: https://www.facebook.com/soulmatterssharingcircle/
- Find musical inspiration on each theme by following the monthly Spotify Lists: https://www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com/spotify-lists.html
- Find support for bringing the monthly themes into your family life with Soulful Home: A Guide for Families: www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com/soulful-home.html

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Full Week Faith

Full Week Faith reminds us to carry our UU faith into our daily lives. Try to take time each day, individually or as a family, to slow down and engage in spiritual & mindful practices to connect your mind, body, & spirit to our faith.

Chalice Lighting

Light a chalice to begin your day, before a meal, or before your spiritual practice...

May this flame, symbol of transformation since time began, fire our curiosity, strengthen our wills, and sustain our courage as we seek what is good within and around us.

by Bets Wieniecke

Spiritual Reflections & Connections

Connecting with Our UU Faith

Each month, we connect our monthly theme to one of our Principles or Sources. This month, we explore our fifth source: Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the
Full Week Faith, cont’d
guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit.
Each week try doing any of the following either alone, or with a friend, partner, or as a family:

- In what way does curiosity relate to our fifth source for you? Journal your thoughts or share them with another.
- Many UUs have a strong belief in humanism. If this rings true for you, does it keep you from being open to other possibilities about life’s big questions such as “What happens after death”? Challenge yourself to engage with someone with differing beliefs by truly listening to and understanding their perspective. Can you set aside your inner thoughts during this time? Are you able to acknowledge their lived experience without judgment?
- Read the short story, A Tour of the Heavens; Clyde Tombaugh Discovers Pluto (https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/journeys/session9/132495.shtml), with your children, grandchildren, or any youngsters in your life. What things in science are they curious about?
- One issue many humanists have is a sensitivity, to religious language, such as the words, “God”, “faith”, and “prayer”. If this is true for you, explore where this comes from in your life. Have you found a way to hear these words without having a negative reaction? And if this isn’t true for you, how did this come to be? Can you offer suggestions to UU humanists on ways to look at this and change how they react and feel?

Books/Stories for Young People

- The Curious Garden by Peter Brown
- Curiosity: The Story of a Mars Rover by Markus Mottom
- The People Could Fly: American Black Folktales by Virgina Hamilton
- Looking for Curious George? You may have thought about the book Curious George for the theme. We did too. However, we followed our curiosity and discovered there are some disturbing frameworks and story lines in it which made us decide to put it to the side. But in the spirit of curiosity and growth, we encourage you to take the time to explore its challenges for yourself. Here’s a good place to start: http://www.raceconscious.org/2015/10/the-problem-with-curious-george/

For Adults and Parents
Videos:

- Mars Rover Curiosity https://vimeo.com/54130221
- The Beauty That Curiosity Sees https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cRmbwcZX6E

Books & Articles:


- Curiosity: How Science Became Interested in Everything - Philip Ball
- How to Think Like Leonardo da Vinci: Seven Steps to Genius Every Day - Michael J. Gelb

Movies:

- Into the Wild @ https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/into_the_wild
- Hidden Figures (PG) https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/hidden_figures
- Temple Grandin (PG) https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/temple_grandin

calling all creative people

Let music lead you into this month’s theme…
Check out this month’s Spotify Playlist for Curiosity!
Go to Spotify and search for Soul Matters-Curiosity.
No need to purchase a subscription to Spotify to listen. There is a free version available, but you will need to log in with your email or Facebook.

if you have original artwork such as paintings, pottery, photography, sculpture, writing, etc. that convey our monthly themes and would be willing to display your work at our church, please submit your pieces to Lois Phillips or Alison Vernon before the first of each month. Upcoming themes: May-Curiosity, June-Beauty.
**Yoga ~ 1st & 3rd Thursdays, 6-7 pm**
Join us in the Spirit Play Room (rm 9/10) for this all-levels class, which focuses on stretches and poses that calm the mind while increasing balance, range of motion, and core strength.

**20-30 Somethings ~ 1st & 3rd Sundays**
If you are in your 20s or 30s, please join us following the worship service in classroom 4. Childcare is available during the meetings. For more info or to be added to our email list, email 2030s@cc uu.org.

**40-50 Somethings: May 18**
On Sat, May 18, we will meet at 7 pm at Bowlero, 350 McHenry Rd, Buffalo Grove. We are not making a reservation in advance, but please RSVP to Leslie Vaughn by Friday, May 17 so when we get there, we know how many lanes to reserve. To RSVP, give your name & # coming via email 4050s@cc uu.org. To be on our email list to receive notification of upcoming events, go to http://cc uu.org/mailman/listinfo/4050slist_cc uu.org

**Journaling Circle: May 2, 10 am**
*Writing Together for Self-Discovery*
We gather on the 1st Thursday of each month. Each gathering opens with a short meditation. We then free write and write from prompts related to our monthly themes. Through sharing our writings, we also share life’s journey and deepen relationships within our community. Bring a notebook/journal and a pen and your desire for personal exploration and growth.

**Buddhist Study Group**
*2nd Sundays, 11:30 am*
All are welcome to join us as we discuss selected Buddhist texts and try to apply the principles and techniques to our everyday lives. We practice mindful breathing, walking meditation, stress management, and cultivate the capacities to be kind and compassionate and to bring joy into our lives.

**Open Forum Discussion**
*Sundays, 9-9:50 am*
Please join us in classroom 5 to discuss “the issues of the day” while respectfully welcoming different perspectives. For more info and/or to join the Forum email list, email vidaxel@axeldesigns.com. Upcoming topics:
- May 5: Discussion of Two Current Events Topics submitted by group members by May 1
- May 12: Can Constitutional Free Speech Principles Save Social Media Companies from themselves?
- May 19: Can we break the cycle of hatred?
- May 26: Positives & Negatives of Capitalism
- June 2: Discussion of Two Current Events Topics submitted by group members by May 19 & 26
- June 9: Trial by Jury in the 21st Century—robust justice or anachronistic catastrophe?

**Current Issues Read with the Minister**
*May 1, 7 pm*
Our conversation on the critical book, American Immanence by UU theologian/political theorist/professor/social analyst Dr. Michael Hogue, will conclude on Weds, May 1. You do not need to have attended the first session or completed reading the book. We will cover some of the main concepts and discuss where the challenges outlined in the book might lead us as congregational and individual Unitarian Universalists. Registration for is not required, but those who register may receive resources related to the discussion. Online registration: https://cc uu.breeze chms.com/form/ReadWithMinister.

**Last Mondays Book Group: May 20**
NOTE: This month, we are meeting on the 3rd Monday to avoid meeting on Memorial Day. All are invited to join us at 7 pm in the Stokes Room to discuss The Kitchen Boy by Robert Alexander.

**Book Circle: June 9**
All are welcome to join the Book Circle to discuss Spiritual Ecology: The Cry of the Earth (second edition), edited by LLeewlyn Vaughan-Lee. Bringing together voices from Buddhism, Sufism, Christianity, and Native American traditions, as well as from physics, deep psychology, and other environmental disciplines, this book calls on us to reassess our underlying attitudes and beliefs about the Earth and wake up to our spiritual as well as physical responsibilities toward the planet. Includes readings from Thich Nhat Hanh, Wendell Berry, Brian Swimme, Joanna Macy, and many others. We gather in classroom 6 at 6:15, discussion begins at 6:30 pm.—please join us!

**Atheist, Humanist, Agnostic (AHA) Discussion ~ 2nd Tuesdays, 7 pm**
All are welcome to join us in classroom 4. On May 14, we will continue last month’s discussion - How Does Humanism & Democracy Inform Your Morality? Paul Whittington will continue to walk us through a series of thought-provoking slides that touches on the phenomenon of where people derive their morality and discuss various morality platforms (Humanism, Democracy, Unitarian Guiding Principles, Common Law).

**Drum Circle ~ June 22, 7 pm**
Adults & teens are invited to join us in Atherton Hall for free-style drumming in a low key, loving, peaceful, welcoming environment. NO DRUMMING EXPERIENCE IS NECESSARY!
Please bring your drums, rattles, didgeridoo, and other instruments to join in on the jam; if you don’t have your own, we will have some limited hand percussion available to share. Dancing and chanting are encouraged. For more information, visit www.PalantineDrumCircle.com
Social Action News

Submit Nominations for Share-the-Plate May 1 - May 19

Would you like your favorite non-profit organization to benefit? From May 1 through May 19, you may submit a nomination for a 501(c)3 organization that you would like to see receive monies from CCUU’s Share-the-Plate program. In this program, half the cash collected in the Offering is given to a charitable, non-profit organization. Share the Plate is offered twice/month, often the 2nd and 4th Sundays. This program is overseen by both the Social Action Committee and the Outreach Steering Committee. Please email nominations or questions to Mari Peckham, CCUUShares@gmail.com

Transitions

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

Monthly Program & Lunch: May 23, 10 am

Join us for our monthly program in Atherton Hall. This month, Kathy Underwood, Countryside’s Interim Director of Religious Education, will speak to us on The Death of Sunday School. The Sunday School that we knew as young parents is not fitting today’s families’ lifestyle. Hear about the trends we’re seeing and explore ways to address them. How can our wise ones help our parents and our congregation today?

Potluck lunch will follow: bring a dish to share or your own individual lunch. All are welcome; invite a friend!

NOTE: in June, we will meet on the 3rd Thursday, and Mary Ellen Heelan will be our presenter.

Hospitality Needed

Welcome people to our spiritual home in the same way you would welcome them to your residence. Sign up online to help - http://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a044ea4a72fa13 – or go to www.ccuu.org and click on the ‘opportunities to serve’ graphic. Contact the church office with questions. Thank you, all!

Used Bookshelf

This small fundraiser for the church operating budget is in Atherton Hall. If you have books which you no longer want, you may place them on the shelf. If you see a book on the shelf you’d like, we ask that you leave $1 per book in the box on the shelf. Periodically, it is refreshed by donating all the books to Palatine Library book sale.

Church Year Highlights to Come

Mark Your Calendar

May ~ Theme: Curiosity
5 Coming of Age Service & Congregational Potluck
12 Flower Communion
18 Chicago Area UU Spring Conference (see p.10)
19 Sr High Bridging & Congregational Annual Mtg

June ~ Theme: Beauty
2 Congregational Potluck & Family Fun Day
16 Summer R.E. Program begins
19-23 UU General Assembly in Spokane WA

Important Information about Recycling at CCUU

We recently incurred a contamination fee for having garbage in our recycling dumpster. Please help us prevent this. First, note that we have two dumpsters; the larger is for garbage, the smaller for recycling. Second, please follow these recycling dos and don’ts:

- DO recycle all empty plastic bottles, cans, paper and cardboard.
- DO keep foods and liquids out of recycling.
- DO keep plastic bags out of recycling.
- DON’T bag your recyclables - plastic bags and film get tangled in the machinery.
- DON’T include food-soiled items - they can turn an entire load of recycling into trash.
- DON’T add sharp or dangerous materials like needles and electronics - they can cause injury to our workers.
- DON’T toss in “tanglers” like rubber hoses and wires - they can shut down an entire recycling center!
- DON’T include bulky items like propane

Thank you!

Reminder: Nut-free Practices

We have put into place restrictions around peanuts and tree nuts in our building. This practice reflects our desire to be a welcoming and safe congregation for members, friends, and visitors who have potentially life threatening allergies to peanuts or tree nuts.

- Please do not bring any food item that contains nuts or has allergen warnings that it may contain nuts. If you are unsure, do not bring it to church.
- Check and recheck labels on all food.
- Bring snack foods that ARE peanut & tree nut safe.

We ask that everyone work together to remind each other not to bring or serve anything with peanuts or tree nuts. If a snack or food item has nuts, we will ask that it be removed and returned to your car. If we do not know who brought the nut item, we will place the item in a labeled Ziploc bag and if no one retrieves the item, it will be discarded.

Empathy and compassion are key to understanding the reason behind these practices. Thank you for assisting to make Countryside Church a more welcoming and even safer place for everyone who walks through our doors. Further details are posted in the kitchen and at http://ccuu.org/peanut-treenut-practices/.
Wellness House Offerings at CCUU

Hypnosis Group & Reiki Sessions
Held here at CCUU the 1st Saturday of the month, these offerings are open to anyone in our geographical area who has or had cancer of any kind. The hypnosis program is led by our community minister, the Rev. Dr. Giles, and the reiki sessions are offered by his wife, the Rev. Dr. Lindsay Bates. These are free; registration is required. To register, email kmitchell@wellnesshouse.org or call 630-654-5197.

Chicago Area UU Spring Conference
Working Together to Be Welcoming to All Saturday, May 18, 9 am-2:30 pm At Countryside Church UU
The conference is conducted in collaboration with UU Action Network of Illinois (UUANI), UU Prison Ministry of Illinois, and Youth and Young Adults (YaYA) Justice. The CAUUC Annual Meeting will take place following the conference.

The conference organizers are encouraging congregations to use this conference to think about how they will focus on Welcoming All into their congregational life as UUANI will be encouraging congregations across the state to do in the fall. The conference will incorporate three elements leading to action:
1) Gathering Service to celebrate our togetherness and ground our work.
2) General session featuring a keynote presentation and panelists to help us understand our practices and inform how they affect how welcoming we are to the very people our UU values demand we seek justice for and with such as: immigrants, people of color, the LGBTQI community, formerly incarcerated people, and socioeconomically disadvantaged people, and youth and young adults.
3) Networking session with Chicago area UUs to build relationships and encourage collaboration because we can get more done as a collective of Chicago area UUs. The following AFFINITY GROUPS are forming and will meet up at the conference to work on making our congregations Welcoming to All:
   - Social Justice / Environmental Justice / Social Action
   - Board and Leadership Development
   - Religious Education (Children & Adult)
   - Buildings and Grounds
   - Membership/Welcoming
   - Stewardship/Fundraising
   - Social Media/Web/Communications
COST: $10 donation requested to cover the cost of the event. If you can afford to pay more, please increase your donation to cover the costs of those that can’t afford to make a donation.
REGISTER: http://uuchicagopera-area.org/workshop
CONTACT Mike Gilley, chicagoparea@gmail.com, with any questions.

Consider Attending General Assembly!

June 19-23 in Spokane WA
General Assembly is the annual meeting of our Unitarian Universalist Association. Attendees worship, witness, learn, connect, and make policy for the Association through democratic process. Anyone may attend; congregations must certify annually to send voting delegates. The 2019 General Assembly will be June 19-23 in Spokane, Washington. Most General Assembly events will be held in the Spokane Convention Center.

This year, our own Alison Vernon will be recognized during the Service of the Living Tradition for completion of her UU Music Leader Credentialing.
GA is an unforgettable experience shared between thousands of fellow Unitarian Universalists. If you would like to speak to CCUU members who have attended GA: Judy Ball, Lisa & Mike Gilley, Gloria Kinney, Laura Mandell, Karen Noorani, Leslie Peet, Elizabeth Vesto, as well as Rev. Hilary, Laurie Lantz, and Kathy Underwood.
Watch this Video re. General Assembly 2018: https://smallscreen.uua.org/videos/the-power-of-we

The Power of We
In a time of great challenge and heartbreak in our world, what does our faith demand from us? At this year’s General Assembly, we will explore the power, possibility, purpose, struggle and joy of finding the path forward together as Unitarian Universalists. Attendees will leave inspired, with the tools needed to carry on the work into their own congregations and communities. Join us as we work for collective liberation inside and outside our faith.

Excellent Programming
GA will offer more than 100 programming selections over the course of five days. This year, in addition to Theme Based Programming, the schedule will feature Role-Based Track Programming, including time for discussion among attendees, sharing inspiring models and stories, and concrete suggestions for how to further the work or “take it home.” https://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/preliminarschedule19.pdf

Participate Off-site/Online
If you can’t make it to Spokane, consider registering as an off-site participant or delegate: https://www.uua.org/ga/off-site. While there are free, live-streamed events for everyone; registering as an off-site registrant or voting delegate allows you to also watch & ask questions in live sessions of workshops and the business sessions – and to vote on behalf of CCUU if registered as an off-site delegate. It’s not free, but it’s significantly cheaper than on-site participation.

While it’s not the same as being there in person, participating as an off-site participant or delegate is a very interesting experience; you get a small taste of what it’s like to be there and of the fascinating democratic process, & there is a small community of other online participants with whom you get to interact.
### Upcoming Church Meetings & Events: May-June

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<th>Sun</th>
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<tr>
<td>9 am Open Forum</td>
<td>6 Ramadan Begins</td>
<td>7pm Stoking Justice</td>
<td>8 10am Great Books Group</td>
<td>9 UUANI Environmental Justice Advocacy Day in Springfield</td>
<td>10 10am Memoir Makers</td>
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<td>10am All-Church Worship</td>
<td>10am Focus publication</td>
<td>7pm Current Issues Read with the Minister</td>
<td>10pm Yoga</td>
<td>7:15pm Choir Rehearsal</td>
<td>11am Congregational Polluck</td>
<td>10am Well-ness House Hypnosis Group &amp; Reiki Sessions</td>
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<td>11am Intro to CCUU</td>
<td>7pm Outreach Steering Council</td>
<td>7pm Board of Trustees Mtg</td>
<td>7:15pm Choir Rehearsal</td>
<td>7:15pm Soul Connections Thurs grp</td>
<td>11:30am Green Sanctuary Mtg</td>
<td>6pm Bowling Circle Suppers</td>
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<td>11:20am 20-30 Somethings</td>
<td>14 7pm Atheist, Humanist, Agnostic Discussion</td>
<td>22 10am Great Books Grp</td>
<td>16 10pm Transitions</td>
<td>10am Soul Connections Fri grps</td>
<td>11:30am Buddhist Study Group</td>
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<td>15 7pm Board of Trustees Mtg</td>
<td>16 10pm Yoga</td>
<td>7:15pm Choir Rehearsal</td>
<td>18 9am Chicago Area UU Spring Conference</td>
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<tr>
<td>10am Worship &amp; Relig.Educ.</td>
<td>10am Focus deadline</td>
<td>7pm Outreach Steering Council</td>
<td>23 10pm Transitions</td>
<td>7:15pm Choir Rehearsal</td>
<td>7pm Soul Connections Thurs grps</td>
<td>7pm 40-50s Bowling Circle Suppers</td>
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<td>11am Fellowship</td>
<td>20 (Last) Mondays Book Discussion</td>
<td>21 7pm Soul Connections Tues grp</td>
<td>7:15pm Choir Rehearsal</td>
<td>11:30am Social Action Mtg</td>
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<td>11:30am Green Sanctuary Mtg</td>
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<td>23 10pm Transitions</td>
<td>7:15pm Choir Rehearsal</td>
<td>24 11am Open Forum</td>
<td>25 9:30am Feminine Divine Women’s Group</td>
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<td>11:30am Buddhist Study Group</td>
<td>24 10pm Transitions</td>
<td>25 11am Open Forum</td>
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<td>10am Flower Communion Worship &amp; Relig.Educ.</td>
<td>27 10am Focus deadline</td>
<td>28 7:15pm Choir Rehearsal</td>
<td>30 7:15pm Choir Rehearsal</td>
<td>June 1 10am Wellness House Hypnosis &amp; Reiki Sessions</td>
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<td>6:15pm Book Circle</td>
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**UU Women’s Connection Retreat in Princeton IL**

*This calendar shows upcoming Church meetings & events. All meetings and events held in the building are listed on the church website, under Programs & Events - [http://ccuu.org/calendar/](http://ccuu.org/calendar/). 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.*
Focus
Published by Countryside Church UU
1025 N Smith Rd - Palatine IL 60067
847-359-8440 - ccuu@ccuu.org - www.ccuu.org

Office Hours: Mon-Thurs 10am-4pm, Fri 9am-Noon
Minister Rev. Hilary L. Krivchenia
Interim Director of Lifespan Kathy Underwood
Religious Education DLRE@ccuu.org
Community Minister Rev. Dr. C. Scot Giles
Music Director Alison Vernon
Music Director Emeritus John Denny
Congregational Laurie Lantz
Administrator ccuu@ccuu.org
Religious Education Minisol Vazquez
Assistant REAssistant@ccuu.org

Lay Ministers
Ken Bobbe, Coordinator
Karen Greenland Joy Simon
Barbara Griggs Chris Smith
For assistance from Lay or Care Ministry, 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 Mission
We are a spiritual community actively answering the call for love, compassion, reason, and justice.

Our Vision
Countryside is committed to being a voice of and active presence for liberal religion in the northwest suburbs. Empowered by our Mission Statement, we endeavor to:
- Create a welcoming place of connectedness, compassion, and respect for people of all ages. Advance inclusivity and diversity within our congregation and community.
- Care for each other in times of joy, sorrow, and transition.
- Provide for spiritual and intellectual growth and inspire lifelong learning.
- Promote a sustainable future for our community and world by acting with a social, environmental, and global conscience.
- Communicate and spread the message of Unitarian Universalism within and beyond our community.
- Engage in thoughtful stewardship of our resources to achieve our mission and carry out our vision.

Upcoming Focus Deadlines
Submit all articles by 10 am to ccuu@ccuu.org
Between Focus issues, written communication is via E-Updates & the Sunday Times insert to the Order of Worship. Deadline for e-updates & Sunday Times is Weds at 9 am.

Follow us on Facebook
https://www.facebook.com/pages/Countryside-Church-
www.ccuu.org