Book Drive
Through Jan 11
Welcome the new year by sharing your great love of books! This Through Jan 11, we are having a book drive for children and youth. The books will be donated to Bernie's Book Bank, so scour your home and/or your local thrift shop for gently used books, or give yourself a reason to frequent that local bookshop you love for something new and wonderful! Bernie's Book Bank collects books for at-risk children and youth throughout the Chicago area, and their mission is to help empower children and lift them out of poverty through the power of reading!

Multigenerational Service Day
At Bernie’s Book Bank
Sat, Jan 11, 3—4:30 pm
Sign up to be part of our big outing to volunteer with Bernie’s Book Bank! We'll be making a special delivery of books collected through our drive to Bernie’s Books, and staying to help with sorting, stickering and packing books for at-risk children. Each child reached will receive a bag of 12 quality, age-appropriate books to keep for their very own. Come boost literacy and the love of books! Sign up online to volunteer at Bernie's -- then please let Jenny Morales know that you have done so. And thanks!

Time to Sign Up for Spring Circle Suppers
Sign up by January 19
Are you looking for a great way to get to know folks better, renew friendships, and make new ones? Circle Suppers are for you! Circle Suppers are Saturday evening potluck dinners held in people’s homes. They are pure fun, connection, and enjoyment!

Full details can be found on the church website, http://ccuu.org/circle-suppers/. The supper dates are February 8, March 21, April 25. Sign up online at https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a044ea4a72fa13-circle, look for the sign-up table in Atherton Hall, or email CircleSuppers@ccuu.org.

Mid-Year Payment Reminder
We've just passed the midpoint of the church fiscal year (Dec 31). Are you midway through your pledge payments? You can make a donation online by clicking the Donate Now button on the front page of www.ccuu.org.

To check your contributions-to-date, go to https://ccuu.breezechms.com/
  • if you have already created an account, log in with your user name & password
  • if you have not created an account, click on “Create Account” under Sign In
  • Once logged in, click on “My Profile.’ Click on ‘Giving’ to view your pledge and contribution history and download it if you want a printed statement.

2019 tax-year statements will be emailed later this month. Thank you for helping us with our mission to actively answer the call for love, compassion, reason, and justice!

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Minister’s Muse

Each month we have a congregational theme – it’s reflected in some way in worship, in religious education, in signs around the building that invite reflection on the theme. And each month there is a spiritual theme that complements the main one. For January, the theme is “integrity” and the spiritual theme is “soul”. I will admit to having heard a bit of skepticism about the theme of integrity. But I have loved that word since studying it many years ago.

Often people think of integrity as having to do with being upright, honest – the Oxford Dictionary (on line), indeed, includes this definition: “the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles; moral uprightness.” I like it – for sure – and we could sure use a lot more honesty, some actual moral principles, and ethics in the world. But I think of this definition of integrity as result of a more fundamental definition – which is also included in the on-line dictionary, “the state of being whole and undivided.” That’s the one I really like.

The first time that my ethics professor used this definition – I was hooked. Being whole – gives you a wise consistency. It means that your actions are a direct result of your core beliefs and your character. It means that you walk your talk because your talk is true. In “The Good Place” Elinor Shelstrom, the main character, discovers that she has a little inner voice that tells her when she is doing wrong and that quiets down when she is doing right. When she is coherent – her inside insight and her outer action have integrity. She has integrity.

Sometimes, a person says the right things and even thinks the right things – but deeper inside they have broken places and they are hungry, angry, scared, lonely... So, instead of being kind or compassionate, they behave with meanness, rudeness, or violence. All the broken stuff needs to be faced, addressed, healed and then they may hear an even deeper voice – the voice of the heart. When broken places are healed there is more wholeness. And out of the wholeness arise new possibilities for how people act.

So, I like the theme of integrity – of wholeness from the inside out.

I also love the idea that, as we heal the broken places – in the world and in our selves – we discover the truth of interdependence – that the world and ourselves are one and the same. When we have a soul-deep integrity, we discover that we are a wholeness within a wholeness – and then our actions rise out of that discovery. Healing the broken places in the world and in ourselves becomes a movement of balance and of moving back and forth in awareness and focus from the wholeness that is you or me and the wholeness that is all. Not one or the other – both – in a rhythm and movement that heals and makes the whole more whole.

It’s why there is no way to be an effective and positive activist in the world without having some inner work and action that heals and renews a person. And there is no lifetime of simply healing oneself that will ultimately ripple out and heal the world. Oh — there will be critical times for each — critical times to work in the world and critical times for rest and healing – both will be needed for real integrity. But, finally, with a greater sense of integrity, the inner and outer, the self and the world, the action and the re-

lection – all will be a fluid quality and balance of living. Like so much else, it takes a lifetime of practice.

So I am intrigued by the theme. And I look forward to the various ways that we explore it together. Having integrity, living with integrity – as individuals in the world and as a congregation in the world.

Are you in Recovery? Would You Like Support?

We are beginning a recovery support group for those in our congregation. This group will be strictly confidential and will meet regularly and off-site to promote confidentiality. As the numbers grow, the number of meetings will increase. If you have had long term sobriety, please consider adding this group to your list of support groups and support others in their recovery. Alcohol recovery support programs do not guarantee success, however, they have been found to reinforce recovery for a significant number of people, and we want to bring this support to our congregation in a form manageable for non-theistic or agnostic persons. If you are interested in participating, please contact Rev. Hilary, minister@ccuu.org or 847-359-8440 ext 2, as soon as possible, as our meeting off-site will require a reservation. Initially, the group will meet every other Thursday, 5:30—7 pm.

Committee Chair Meeting
Sunday, January 26, 11:30-12:30

Join Board Vice President Kathi Hillyer in classroom 1 for our quarterly ministry-program meeting. We will check in as to how things are going for your group and talk about plans for the rest of the church year. If the chair of your committee-program-group can’t make it, please ask someone else from your group to attend. On Dec 29, Kathi sent program leads a worksheet which will be used during the meeting on Jan 26. If your committee-program-group did not receive the email and worksheet, contact Kathi, kathioh@aol.com, or pick up a copy from the church office.

Some of the groups at CCUU have budgets and are included in the overall CCUU budget. If you are a group with a budget line item, please have your budget worksheet submitted to Kathi Hillyer by January 19. The budget team and Board will then be working on the budget for the 2020-2021 church year, and your input is invaluable! If you did not receive the budget worksheet, please contact Kathi immediately, or pick up a copy from the church office. Thank you for all you do for CCUU!

On some questions, Cowardice asks the question, “Is it safe?” Expediency asks the question, “Is it polite?” And Vanity comes along and asks the question, “Is it popular?” But Conscience asks the question, “Is it right?” And there comes a time when we must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular, but we must do it because Conscience tells us it is right.

~ Martin Luther King Jr
From Your Board President
I am composing this a couple of days before I have to start remembering to put 2020 on the date line of whatever checks I still write. I think it may take me a bit longer for it to sink in that we are starting not only a new year, but a new decade as well.

Your Board of Trustees is already looking ahead and making plans for the remainder of the 2019-20 church year. Our Vice-President, Kathi Hillyer, is meeting with committee chairs and program leadership on January 26 after worship to talk about future plans and goals, which will lead to looking at budget requests to help bring those plans and goals to fruition. Along similar lines, Trustee Karen Epps, who has graciously agreed to head up our stewardship campaign again this year, presented a tentative timeline for the campaign to the Board at our December meeting. You will be hearing more about that in the days and weeks to come as we celebrate how fortunate we are to be part of a church family "living" in a church home and contemplating how we each can best help to keep that family and home healthy and strong. Hilary and I will meet with your CCUU Nominating Committee on January 22 to start talking about the process of putting together a slate of candidates for open positions on the Board of Trustees, Endowment Committee, and Nominating Committee in order to meet the bylaws requirements for informing the congregation of this slate prior to our annual congregational meeting in May.

I mention all of this as a reminder that there are always lots of things going on at Countryside - - plans, preparations, process - - that help keep us headed in a positive and productive direction. As a member/friend of our CCUU family, you are always encouraged to be a part of what's going on. So if you haven't already found something you're interested in participating in or contributing to, make it one of your New Year's resolutions to do so - - I guarantee it's more fun than the sidelines!

Mark your calendar for January 19 when our 20-30 Somethings will host our monthly potluck, and remember to bring a dish to share that Sunday. And while your calendar is out, put down the following Sunday, January 26, when the Board and the Chalice House team will host another town hall following worship in order to give you the latest update on the progress on the Chalice House project.

There is already lots in store for 2020 - - so plan to be a part of it in a way that is meaningful to you.

As always, feel free to contact me at prez@ccuu.org.

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Chalice House Next Steps
We continue to make progress in connection with Chalice House. After several months of exploration, discussion and fundraising, the Chalice House team has concluded that there is widespread support for converting our north property house into transitional housing for immigrants seeking asylum in partnership with Interfaith Community for Detained Immigrants (ICDI).

Over the past several months, the Chalice House Team has:

- Explored the ramifications of this change, including financial, zoning, legal, home repairs, hospitality, and long-term planning considerations.
- Discussed the change with the congregation, leadership, and community partners. We will continue to hold Town Hall meetings to provide additional information, answer questions, and hear feedback.
- With leadership and oversight from Treasurer Marcus White, reviewed the financial needs and outlook for the first two years of the program through fiscal year 2021. We are confident that, along with Time and Talent funds, we have enough donor commitments to replace lost rental income for at least two years.

It is important to note that the change is not permanent. Under the terms of the partnership, we are committed to between six months and two years, at which time we can reassess the situation.

A Town Hall will be held on January 26 following the service to discuss the status of Chalice House, but in the meantime following are some key updates on progress:

- We continue to receive financial commitments, and funds from various community partners have already been received.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between CCUU and ICDI has been executed. The MOU was reviewed and drafted by attorney and CCUU member Matt Myren.
- At its December meeting, the CCUU Board of Trustees approved moving forward with next steps, including providing notice to tenants and preparing the house for availability by May 2020.
- A crowdfunding page has been created here... https://faithify.org/projects/immigrant-housing-in-chalice-house/. Feel free to share with anyone who may be interested in supporting this project.

We hope that by now your questions about this project have been addressed and answered, but if you have additional questions, please reach out to Chalice House Chairs Christine Organ and Laura Mandell at chalicehouse@ccuu.org.

Chalice House sub-teams will be actively planning for the transition on January 12 from 11:30-2:00. Anyone interested in helping is welcome to join us!

Music with a Mission
Our annual musical extravaganza is March 7, 2020, and NOW is the time to start behind-the-scenes planning so that we can bring you this event, which is entertaining and raises much needed funds for our service partners.

MwaM has become so successful that this year we need CHAIRPERSONS for the component functions of the event: Snacks, Door Management, Decorations, 50/50 Raffle, and Clean Up.

We'll have a short, organizational meeting soon. Please contact Edie Reese by January 15, 2020 at edithreesee07@gmail.com or 847-502-2340.
MidAmerica UU History Webinar
Participate here at CCUU

We have registered for a congregational rate for the UU History webinar described below. We will host a group here in classroom 2. We currently have space for up to 5 people and can register for more if there is interest. Please let us know if you plan to participate: DLRE@ccuu.org or Office@ccuu.org. Thanks!

Whose History Is It Anyway?
Mondays, Jan 27-Feb 24, 6:45 pm

How much do you know about the roots of our faith tradition? Explore the history of Unitarianism, Universalism, and Unitarian Universalism in this five-week class presented by MidAmerica UUA and the Rev. Connie Simon. Using an anti-colonialist, multicultural lens, we’ll look beyond the traditional, dusty facts of history and examine to see how our faith was born and how it has developed and evolved over the years.


Guest at Your Table
Contributions due January 19

Guest at Your Table (GAYT) is UUSC’s annual intergenerational program to raise support for and awareness about critical human rights issues. Since UUSC’s founding, their work has been shaped and sustained by women’s leadership. Today, they partner with women leaders who are increasing representation for women in their communities, while strengthening access to justice for all.

Donations to Guest at Your Table help UUSC and their partners respond to extraordinary human rights challenges of today, address root causes of injustice, and build capacity to respond to future crises. UUSC is a 79-year-old human rights organization grounded in Unitarian Universalist values and founded to support refugees and political dissidents fleeing Nazi Germany. Through research, advocacy, and partnerships with innovative grassroots organizations, UUSC advances human rights in the United States and around the globe.

Contributions of any amount qualify for UUSC membership. Contributions of $125 or more are eligible to be matched dollar-for-dollar by the UU Congregation of Shelter Rock in Manhasset, NY.

Contributions will be collected during our January 19 all-church worship service or can be submitted to the church office by Jan 26. For more info, go to uusc.org/guest.

From Our Director of Lifespan Religious Education

When I "look down the long hallway of the past year,” as Rev. Hilary suggested we do last Sunday, I am surprised that the predominant feelings I have are of gratitude and peace. After all, it’s been a tough year for our nation – for way too many, it’s been horrific, actually. And for me, personally, it’s been turbulent, to be sure. A year ago, I was learning a great deal and trying to be happy in my work, but I knew change was coming, and it made me deeply anxious – an anxiety I found reflected all around me in the national news. I didn’t know what would happen, and I didn’t feel ready. But I reminded myself that I was a free soul, and that I could take steps to make things better for myself, one way or another. So I just put my fear of the unknown into my pocket, screwed up my courage and, with the help of friends, moved forward.

And that’s how I came to be among you at Countryside – and for this gift, I am profoundly grateful and at peace. At peace not because we don’t have work to do – on the contrary: I see our work together laid out before us, and there’s a good deal to be done. But after four months among you, I can see that we are up to it, and that it is work that can make use of my talents – work I am fit for. So yes, despite the turbulence of the year, I find myself profoundly grateful, and experiencing an unanticipated serenity.

Looking ahead to the year 2020, a year bespeaking focus and vision, I think there’s a lesson about our nation and world, a lesson for our movement, in the story of my personal year. I confess, I am full of anxiety for the coming year and decade – I know that so much is riding on the choices we make in the near future. I know change is coming, and I don’t feel ready. Even so, I am a free soul, and I woke up this morning, so it is not too late for me to make things better, one way or another. And I belong to a whole faith community of free souls who woke up this morning, still able to engage the work that’s needed from us. Occasionally I hear from even enlightened souls around me a sense of despair – a keening cry of “It’s too late.” But we are still here, still generally strong of heart and relatively sound of body, so it’s not hopeless. Indeed for me, it would be the very worst use of my privilege to fail to take up the burdens before me. And even in the moments when we feel at our weakest, still we have one another for respite and mutual encouragement. Wherever we may find ourselves on the timeline of change, friends – whatever our sense of foreboding – it is not too late to do the good that we can do, and it is work we are fit for. Best to pocket our fear, screw up our courage and, with the help of friends, move forward together. Blessings on our journey. May it bring us peace that passes understanding. Better get started. ...Mary
Upcoming Worship Services

Worship Services & Religious Education Classes are on Sundays at 10:00 am.

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/

Jan 12  Building Intergenerational Community  Dr. Mary Lamb Shelden
Young people begin in the Sanctuary with their families and will be sung out to their religious education classes.

Jan 19  All-Church MLK Service  Rev. Hilary L. Krivchenia
This is an all-church service; young people attend the service with their families.
Please bring your donations for Guest at Your Table (see p. 4 for details).
Share the Plate: We will share half the cash collected in the offering to Community Renewal Society.
Be sure to stay afterward for our monthly Congregational Potluck—bring a dish to share.

Jan 26  Seeing Clearly  Rev. Hilary L. Krivchenia
Young people begin in the Sanctuary with their families and will be sung out to their religious education classes.

Feb 2   Community Ministry Sunday  Rev. Dr. C. Scot Giles
Young people begin in the Sanctuary with their families and will be sung out to their religious education classes.
Share the Plate: Half the cash collected in the offering will be donated to UU Society of Community Ministries.

Feb 9   to be announced  Rev. Hilary L. Krivchenia
Young people begin in the Sanctuary with their families and will be sung out to their religious education classes.

Feb 16  All-Church Service  Sr High Youth Group
This is an all-church service; young people attend the service with their families.
Share the Plate: Half the cash collected in the offering will be donated to Revolution Workshop.

Be Part of Worship

Light the Chalice and/or Sponsor Worship Flowers
When you light the chalice – as an individual, couple, family, friends, you will receive the words to speak days before the service or you can choose to simply light the chalice without speaking, as the minister or someone else reads -- your choice. When you sponsor flowers for the service, you can dedicate them in honor or memory of a person or an occasion. Sign up online: https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a044ea4a72fa13-worship

Gong Bath and Sound Meditation

Wed, Feb 12, 7 pm
Waves of sound calm the mind and create an atmosphere conducive to meditation and healing. Paiste gongs have a pure sound that reverberates deeply. Crystal bowls are tuned to each of the chakras.

Join Rev. Hilary Krivchenia and Elizabeth Vesto for an evening of gongs & crystal bowls Feb 12 in Atherton Hall. Donations gratefully accepted.

Intro to CCUU ~ 1st Sundays
Newcomers are invited to attend a brief orientation to Countryside Church and Unitarian Universalism any 1st Sunday following worship.

Path to Belonging
February 9 & 16, 11:30 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. The classes will be offered again May 31 & June 7. Email Membership@ccuu.org for more info.

How to Find CCUU Sign-up Lists
Click on the ‘Opportunities to Serve’ icon on the front page of ccuu.org, which takes you toSignUpGenius; there provide the sign-up creator’s email, ccuu@ccuu.org, and select a sign-up.

Sunday Volunteers Needed
Please sign up to greet, usher, and help with AV - http://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a044ea4a72fa13-sunday. Contact the church office with questions. Thank you!
What does it mean to be a People of Integrity?

Wholeness is never lost; it is only forgotten. Integrity rarely means that we need to add something to ourselves; it is more an undoing than a doing, a freeing ourselves from beliefs we have about who we are and ways we have been persuaded to “fix” ourselves… Often in reclaiming the freedom to be who we are, we remember some basic human quality, what we find is almost always a surprise but it is also familiar; like something we have put in the back of a drawer long ago…

- Rachel Naomi Remen, Kitchen Table Wisdom

We know the usual “integrity advice:” Build your character! Get better at being honest, with others and yourself! It’s about addition, we’re told. Being better. Becoming more.

But our faith, like Rachel Naomi Remen, says it’s more complicated than that. Some subtraction is also needed. Removal needs to occur. The path needs to be cleared.

And why? Well because integrity isn’t simply something we build; it’s something already there. We UUs talk mostly about inherent worth, but we also believe in inherent integrity. All the building blocks are sitting there, waiting. They are, as Remen says, hidden like something we have put in the back of the drawer long ago.

It’s all a reminder that our integrity is much more closely tied to memory than we acknowledge. Those moments from our youth when we felt most truly ourselves. Those mentors and models that departed wisdom about what really matters. It’s all there. Just forgotten. As the poet, Charles Bukowski says, “Can you remember who you were, before the world told you who you should be?”

So friends, please don’t make this month just about “being better.” Make some time to also be quiet. Think of the hunt for integrity more like getting away from all the noise of the traffic so the song of the birds can be heard. Or like when we wandered off a bit too far into the woods as a kid. It could have been scary, but somehow we knew that all we had to do was stand still and listen. We knew the call of our parents would soon come, leading us back home. It’s the same with our memories and our deepest selves: They are calling to us from the edge of the woods.

All we have to do is stop and listen.

Questions for Considering Integrity

As always, don’t treat these questions like “homework” or try to answer every single one. Instead, make time to meditate 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? Which one contains “your work”? And what is that question trying to get you to notice or acknowledge? And don’t forget, often 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’s your “integrity path”? Is integrity for you about staying faithful, allowing yourself to unfold, putting the pieces back together, matching your insides with your outsides or refusing to hide?
2. Is integrity harder or easier for you than it was when you were young?
3. What did your family of origin teach you about telling the truth? How about telling the truth of yourself?
4. Is it time to remember what your 20-year old self hoped you’d be?
5. Who is most likely to walk away if you stop hiding?
6. Could it be that integrity actually wants you to break that promise?
7. That thing about yourself you’re trying to fix… Is it really you that wants it fixed? Or them? Who are you fixing it for?
8. Which of society’s lies was the hardest for you to shake off: “You are what you have,” “You are what you do” or “You are what other people say or think about you”?
9. What’s so scary to you about saying, “I’m sorry”?
10. Can you imagine a workplace where you don’t have to wear a mask?
11. Whose voice is making it hard to hear your own?
12. What if you told yourself that you are different not less?
13. Are you tired of accepting their apology?
14. Do you feel authentic?
15. Which is easier for you? Telling the truth to others or telling the truth to yourself?
16. Do your friendships have integrity?
17. Does your spiritual life have integrity?
18. Are you tired of being so good at pretending?

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Our Soul Connections small ministry groups discuss the monthly themes, questions, and activities each month. For further info regarding the Soul Connections program, go to http://ccuu.org/soulconnections/

- Get daily inspiration on the monthly theme by liking the CCUU Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/pages/Countryside-Church-Unitarian-Universalist/218478024883750
- 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
Emerging Young Adults Group
2nd & 4th Sundays, 6 pm
Those who are 18-30 years of age, whether newly out of school or attending college or working, are invited to join us in classroom 4 on the 2nd & 4th Sundays of the month for conversation and community.

20-30 Somethings
1st Sundays, 11:20 am
If you are in your 20s or 30s, please join us on the 1st Sundays of the month after worship in classroom 4. Childcare is available during our meetings. We also plan service projects and social outings for other times during the month—and we’re planning our annual summer camping trip! For more info or to be added to our email list, email 2030s@ccuu.org.

40-50 Somethings
The ages included in the title of our group are not intended to be restrictive; all are welcome to join us! If you have an idea for an activity for the group, email 4050s@ccuu.org. To join our email list, go to http://ccuu.org/mailman/listinfo/4050slist_ccuu.org.

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

Monthly Program & Lunch: Jan 23, 10 am
Our program on Thursday, January 23, will be presented by the Cicarelli family and other clients and staff of Clearbrook on The Story of Chicagoland’s Clearbrook, a caring organization that serves people over a range of ages and disabilities from children diagnosed with developmental delays at birth to the unique needs of seniors with disabilities and all ages in between.
Potluck lunch follows the program; bring a dish to share or your own individual lunch. All are welcome; invite a friend!

Social Action News
Monthly Fair Trade Sale: Jan 12
Once/month, we offer fair trade chocolate, coffee, tea, cocoa, olive oil, and snacks for sale during our coffee-fellowship time. For each pound of Equal Exchange food purchased, 20 cents goes to the UUSC’s Small Farmer Fund, https://www.uusc.org/uusc-fair-trade-project/.

MLK Faith in Action Assembly: Jan 20
How will you commemorate Dr. King’s Birthday? Join fellow UUs at Community Renewal Society’s Interfaith Assembly at Metropolitan Missionary Baptist Church. Register now: CommunityRenewalSociety.org. Carpooling available from Countryside; contact Yvette Johnson for details.

Monthly PADS Meal: Weds, Jan 22
Our congregation is responsible for providing dinner for the PADS shelter at Presbyterian Church of Palatine on the 4th Weds. of the month, October through April.
If you would like to provide part of this month’s meal, please sign up online, https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a044ea4a72fa13-2020. Contact Leslie Luther, bawdirector@gmail.com or 847-702-4717, with questions.

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. Email vidaxel@axeldesigns.com for more info and/or to join the Forum email list. Upcoming topics are listed below. Future topics are tentative; the ones scheduled for the upcoming two Sundays are the least likely to change, but current events developments or other factors sometimes inspire us to switch late.

- Jan 12: Discussion of a Recent Current Events Topic. In the weeks leading up to the discussion date, participants send Vid suggestions of a subject of recent news headlines. If Vid receives no suggestions, he picks one.
- Jan 19: Truth—A What, Where, and Why Investigation
- Jan 26*: Compared to Your Teenaged Expectations, How Has Your Post-30 Life Unfolded?
- Feb 2: Discussion of a Recent Current Events Topic. (same date as for Jan 12, above)
- Feb 9: What Common Ground Exists Between Republicans & Democrats that Both Fail to Appreciate?

*Our Jan 26 topic is inspired by the worship service on Dec 1, when pulpit guest Rev. Linda Slabon asked those present who were over 30 years of age to raise their hands if their lives had unfolded mostly the way they expected when they were 15 years old. Only one person in the congregation raised a hand. We plan to discuss this question. Participants will be welcome to share their stories comparing expectation & reality and will be free just to listen if they prefer. People younger than 30 are welcome to participate, and, if they wish to share, may speculate about their futures and about whether they imagine life will unfold for them as they expect.

Sing with Choir
Do you enjoy singing? Then perhaps you would enjoy singing with our choir. We rehearse on Thursday evenings at 7:15-9:15. Just come on in. We’ll be saving a seat for you! Childcare is provided during rehearsals.

NOTE: there will not be choir rehearsal on Jan 9, 16, or 23 or on Feb 13 or 27. For more info, contact Alison Vernon, 847-359-8440 ext. 5 or Music.Director@ccuu.org.

Children & Youth Choirs
Young people in 1st thru 8th grades are invited to meet in the Music Rehearsal Room after Sunday School, about 11:15, for a 20-minute fun rehearsal. For more info, contact Alison Vernon.
Women 60+ Building a Village  
**Thurs, Jan 9, 10 am**  
Countryside offers women 60 years and older a place where we can build our own village. We are reading and discussing On Jan 9, we will discuss chapters 6 and 7 of *Women Rowing North* by Mary Pipher. As agreed last month, we will begin together with our covenant and a meditation and then split up randomly into two groups for discussions.  
*Please join us on the second Thursday of each month from 10-11:30am. Feel free to bring a beverage.*

**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.

Atheist, Humanist, Agnostic (AHA) Discussion ~ 2nd Tuesdays, 7 pm  
All are welcome to join us in classroom 4 on Jan 14, when Bill Marsh will present on the idea of memory—what memory is, how memory works, how people have historically understood memory, and how we might understand memory today—followed by discussion.

**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.

Journaling Circle ~ Feb 6, 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, a pen, & your desire for personal exploration and growth.

**Have a Smart Phone or Tablet?**  
Download the free Breeze CHMS (church management system) app! Once downloaded, the church ID is CCUU. Check your giving and access the church directory right from your phone.

**Stoking Justice**  
**Thinking Like an Economist**  
**Mondays at 7 pm, Jan 20—April 6**  
All are welcome to join us in classroom 1 on any Monday evening! This spring session will review the reviews how an economist would think about social issues like climate change, subprime mortgage problems, etc. No math required, but bring your moral compass.

**Upcoming Book Discussions**  
**Book Circle: January 19**  
All are welcome to join us to discuss *How to Change Your Mind: What the New Science of Psychedelics Teaches Us About Consciousness, Dying, Addiction, Depression, and Transcendence* by Michael Pollan. We gather at 6:15 pm in classroom 6, discussion begins at 6:30 pm.—please join us!

**Last Mondays Book Group: Jan 27**  
All are invited to join us at 7 pm in the Stokes Room to discuss *The Overstory* by Richard Powers.

**Feminine Divine Women’s Group**  
**Last Saturdays, 9:30 am**  
We meet in classroom 6. We are currently discussing *Almost Everything: Notes On Hope* by Anne Lamott.

**Church Year Highlights to Come**  
**Mark Your Calendar**

**January ~ Theme: Integrity**  
11  Book Drive & Volunteering at Bernie’s Book Bank  
19  All-Church MLK Service followed by monthly potluck lunch

**February ~ Theme: Resilience**  
Annual Stewardship Drive  
16  All-Church Sr High Service

**March ~ Theme: Wisdom**  
7  Music with a Mission  
14  Pi Day Party  
15  Monthly Potluck after worship

**April ~ Theme: Liberation**  
10  Passover Seder  
12  Easter  
18  Selfie Scavenger Hunt  
18  MidAmerica UU Regional Assembly in Rockford  
19  All-Church Earth Day service & Potluck  
26  Western Crescent Choral Fest at CCUU

**May ~ Theme: Thresholds**  
16  Kindness Rock Geocaching Hike  
17  Congregational Annual Meeting

**June ~ Theme: Play**  
7  All-Church Flower Communion, Family Fun Day & Congregational Potluck  
14  Pride Service  
21  Summer Solstice Service  
24-28: UU General Assembly in Providence RI
From MidAmerica UUA Newsletter
Read in full and/or subscribe at: https://www.uua.org/midamerica/news/blog

- **UU the Vote**: Our UUA has a new, values-based electoral justice effort officially launching this month—UU the Vote. UU the Vote supports UU congregations and UU organizations with resources to mobilize voters, counter voter suppression, and engage in spiritually grounded, values-based issue conversations...

- **Dismantling White Supremacy Resource of the Month**: Have you been looking for “a next-generation community platform, [that] chronicles and celebrates the stories, people and voices that are emerging and inspiring all of us, ranging in topics from pop culture and style to politics and news, all through the lens of today’s LGBTQ...”

- **Finding Our Way Home: A Retreat for Religious Professionals of Color**

- **January MidAmerica Webinars**
  - Whose History Is It Anyway? 5 consecutive Monday evenings beginning Jan 27. Cost $25/individual; $60 for a congregational group *CCUU will offer a viewing of the webinar here; please email the office to let us know if you plan to participate.*
  - Discussing the UUA’s 2020 Common Read: Jan 21, 6:45 pm Central Time – Free.

- **Regional Assembly 2020**: RA 2020 will be held at The UU Church, Rockford, Illinois on Saturday, April 18. Keynote Taquiena Boston, Special Advisor to the UUA President for Institutional Inclusion, Equity, and Change, will speak on the topic “Can We Design Beloved Community?” Other workshops have also been announced. Registration will open mid-January.

- **Winter Chalice Lighter Call** is to assist with the efforts of First Unitarian Church in Cincinnati in growing their congregation through digital media infrastructure upgrades.

  **In addition, the MidAmerica Chalice Lighter Program is also supporting CCUU’s Chalice House project! Chalice Lighters will contribute 10% of the total amount we receive through our Faithify campaign (see Chalice House update in this newsletter).**

  Chalice Lighter grants are funded by small donations from individuals like you—donations that are pooled together to help congregations from across our large MidAmerica Region of the UUA with specific growth projects. We are awarding a single large grant of over $10,000 to one congregation for each Call, so that congregations can receive more funds for starting new fellowships, acquiring meeting space, securing a minister, religious educator, or other professional staff, or providing for outreach and public relations. Smaller grants will still be available in the form of contributions of up to $1000 to Faithify campaigns posted by MidAmerica congregations.

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**General Assembly 2020**

**June 24-28, Providence, RI**

*Rooted, Inspired, Ready*

General Assembly (GA) is the annual meeting of our Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). Attendees worship, witness, learn, connect, and make policy for the Association through democratic process. Anyone may attend.

Early Bird Registration is now open through March 15; new this year: a monthly installment plan to pay for your registration. Housing Reservations will open March 2. For more info, go to https://www.uua.org/ga.

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**WhaleCoast Alaska 2020**

Four UU congregations in Alaska invite you to our eco-cultural and spiritual program this summer. See Alaska through the eyes of local UUs, with friendly homestays and unique tour activities. See wildlife, including moose, bears, caribou, whales, bald eagles, sealions, etc. Visit Denali National Park. Experience Native Alaskan culture. Forget the cruise ships—our program is truly the best way to visit Alaska!

Tours led by Dave Frey, member of the Fairbanks UU congregation and Alaska travel expert. Find out more about this Alaskan trip of a lifetime. For complete info, go to WhaleCoastAK.org, email dfrey@whalecoastak.org, call 907-322-4966, or email Dfrey@whalecoastak.org. Discount for groups of 8 or more. We would love to share our Alaska with you!

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**Our Winter Weather Closing Policy**

Since we’ve already had our first snow, let’s take this time to remind you that if the decision is made to close the church, we will publicize the decision:

- on the church website,
- on the church Facebook page,
- on the Congregational Administrator’s voicemail message (847-359-8440 ext 1), and
- with the Emergency Closing Center (which publishes on the local TV and radio stations).

Guidelines considered when making the decision: If the wind chill in the greater Chicago area is colder than 40 degrees below zero or if a weather emergency has been issued because of snow or wind, we will cancel all church events, including any committee meetings, office hours, Sunday morning religious education, and Sunday worship.


CCUU puts a high priority on the safety of staff, members, and guests. Although the church may remain open, individuals may find that their local conditions make it unsafe for them to travel. *When in doubt, please stay home!*
Chicago Interfaith Fair  
**Thurs, Feb 6, Noon – 6 pm**

Join the faith and spiritual communities in Chicago for a special celebration of the 10th Anniversary of the United Nations World Interfaith Harmony Week. Featuring the participation of Chicago-based interfaith organizations, programming, art, and exhibits. This event is open to the public and free of cost.

The Chicago Interfaith Fair is an event organized in partnership with interfaith organizations from the city and surrounding suburbs. Our partners include Faith In Place, Interfaith Youth Core, OMNIA, Spiritual Playdate, the Niagara Foundation and the Interreligious Institute at CTS.

Made possible through the support of the John Templeton Foundation, this event is for the Chicago community by the Chicago community.


UU Men’s Retreat  
**Jan 24-26, 2020**

All men are welcome to join those from Unity Temple UUC, Unitarian Church of Evanston, and DuPage UU Church at Cabrini Retreat Center in Des Plaines for a retreat on the theme of *Connection with Self and Other Men.* More details and information about how to register can be found on the form on the bulletin board across from the church office.

From the UUA International Office  
**All In For Climate Justice: People, Power, Planet ~ April 10-13, 2020**

The UU United Nations Office invites participants age 14+ to gather in New York City for their 2020 Intergenerational Spring Seminar. It will include workshops, worship, panels, creative activities, and more. Programming will equip participants with the skills and information to get involved with local organizing for climate justice and make change to move us toward a more just, equitable, and sustainable world. Attendees will be inspired to reflect on how the topics addressed affect them in their lives, their spirituality, and how they are called to respond. Registration opens Dec 2. For more info and to register, go to [https://www.uua.org/international-justice/un/spring-seminar](https://www.uua.org/international-justice/un/spring-seminar)

UU Partner Church Council Public Trips  

Connect with the global UU story.

**Thanksgiving Pilgrimage:** Transylvania September 2020. The UUPCC will also offer their annual Thanksgiving Pilgrimage to Transylvania in late September 2020. Thanksgiving is one of the four most significant celebrations for our Transylvanian Unitarian kinfolk.

**Looking ahead,** UUPCC will offer their first-ever trip to visit English Unitarians in February 2021 and a trip to share in the annual Anniversary celebration of the Unitarian Union of NE India in September 2021.

For more info and to register, go to the UUPCC website: [https://uupcc.org/pilgrimages/pilgrimage-opportunities](https://uupcc.org/pilgrimages/pilgrimage-opportunities)

Outside Groups Held at & Open to CCUU  

Several outside groups use space at Countryside Church UU and are in alignment with our UU Principles and open to participation by all. There may be a participation fee or other requirements set by the group and which apply to all participants, regardless of CCUU affiliation.

- **Wellness House Hypnosis Group & Reiki Sessions** are held here at CCUU the 1st Saturday of the month, these offerings are open to anyone in our area who has or had cancer of any kind. Free and registration is required; call 630-654-5197 or email kmitchell@wellnesshouse.org.

- **Great Plains Zen Center** (GPZC) sits meditation on Sundays at 7 pm and offers monthly Intro to Zen workshops. For more info about GPZC’s programs, refer to “Other Religious Voices” bulletin board across from the church office or go to [www.greatplainszen.org](http://www.greatplainszen.org).

- **Transcend** is a program of Youth Outlook which meets here every Wednesday evening. It is a support group focusing on gender identity and is geared towards Trans youth. It is suggested for 14-20 yr olds. For more info, go to [www.youth-outlook.org](http://www.youth-outlook.org) or talk to CCUU member Kim Tilford.

- **Citizens’ Climate Lobby, Chicago Northwest Suburbs Chapter** meets here 2nd Saturdays. For more info, go to [https://citizensclimatelobby.org/chapters/IL_Chicago_Northwest_Suburbs/](https://citizensclimatelobby.org/chapters/IL_Chicago_Northwest_Suburbs/)

- **Journey Transgender Support Group** is for anyone transgender, gender queer, androgynous, or gender questioning; meets the 2nd and 4th Sundays at 2:30 pm in classroom 5. Meetings are limited to people 18 or over, unless accompanied by a parent. transgende_journey-subscribe@yahoo.com

- **Agape: A Community of New Hope** holds worship in our Sanctuary on Saturday evenings. We are happy to help an emerging faith community that, although a different denomination, is welcoming of all and aligns with UUism on social justice issues.

- **AA:** Men’s Meeting: Saturdays, 9-10 am; Women’s Meeting: Fridays, 7:30 pm

- **Job Search Circle (JSC)** meets in Atherton Hall on Wednesdays, 9-11am. $5/meeting. Dress code is business casual. For more info, go to [www.jobsearchcircle.org](http://www.jobsearchcircle.org) or email JSC founder Rosemary Monahan, Rmonahan@jobsearchcircle.org.

- **Career Communicators** is a Toastmasters Internation Club dedicated to professional speaking. Meets in Atherton Hall the 1st & 3rd Tuesday of the month, 7-9 pm. More info: [www.careercommunicators.com](http://www.careercommunicators.com).

- **St Hubert Job Ministry** Events are nondenominational, free, open to all occupations, and held at various member churches. Go to [http://www.sainthubert.org/ministries/job.html](http://www.sainthubert.org/ministries/job.html)
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<td><strong>Upcoming Church Meetings &amp; Events: Jan-Feb</strong></td>
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<td>Jan 8</td>
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<td><strong>This calendar shows upcoming Church meetings &amp; events. All meetings and events held in the building are listed on the church website, under Programs &amp; Events - <a href="http://ccuu.org/calendar/">http://ccuu.org/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.</strong></td>
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<td>Jan 8</td>
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<td>Jan 12</td>
<td>3pm Outreach Steering Council</td>
<td>7am Board of Trustees Mtg</td>
<td>10am Women 60+ Building a Village</td>
<td>2pm OWL Parent Mtg</td>
<td>3pm Bernie's Book Bank</td>
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<td>9 am Open Forum</td>
<td>10am cafe</td>
<td>11am: Monthly Fair Trade sale</td>
<td>11:15am: Children’s Choir</td>
<td>11:30am: Chalice House Team Mtg</td>
<td>11:30am: OWL Parent Mtg</td>
<td>11:30am: Buddhist Study Grp</td>
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<td>20 MLK Day</td>
<td>Church Offices will be closed</td>
<td>8am Faith in Action Assembly</td>
<td>7pm Stoking Justice</td>
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<td>21 10am: Soul Connections Tues AM grp</td>
<td>7pm: Soul Connections Tues PM grp</td>
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<td>22 10a-4p: PADS Meal: deliver food items to Presby Church</td>
<td>10am: Great Books Grp</td>
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<td>23 10am: Transitions</td>
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<td>25 9:30am: Feminine Divine Women's Grp</td>
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<td>Jan 26</td>
<td>9 am: Open Forum</td>
<td>10am: Worship &amp; Relig.Ed.</td>
<td>11am: Town Hall Mtg</td>
<td>11:15am: Children’s Choir</td>
<td>11:30am: Program-Ctte Chairs Mtg</td>
<td>11:30am: Social Action Mtg</td>
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<td>27 7am: Stoking Justice</td>
<td>7pm: Last Mondays Book Group</td>
<td>7pm: MidAmerica UU History webinar</td>
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<td>29 Focus deadline</td>
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<td>30 7:15pm: Choir</td>
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<td>Jan 31</td>
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<td>3 7pm: Stoking Justice</td>
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<td>5 Focus publication</td>
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<td>5 10am: Journaling Circle</td>
<td>6pm: Yoga</td>
<td>7:15pm: Choir</td>
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<td>8 1pm: Cupcake Wars</td>
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<td>Feb 9</td>
<td>9 am: Open Forum</td>
<td>10am: Worship &amp; Relig.Ed.</td>
<td>11:15am: Children’s Choir</td>
<td>11:30am: Path to Belonging</td>
<td>11:30am: Buddhist Study Grp</td>
<td>11:30am: Green Sanctuary</td>
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<td>10 7pm: Stoking Justice</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<td>12 10am: Great Books Grp</td>
<td>7pm Sound Meditation</td>
<td>7pm Finance Ctte Mtg</td>
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<td>12 10am: Women 60+ Building a Village</td>
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### 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. Promote peace and justice in our congregation, communities, and the world. 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
- Jan 29 (publ. Feb 5)
- Mar 25 (publ. April 1)
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 10 am.