From Your Board President

As I write this column, we are about 6 weeks into shelter-in-place status and while I certainly miss being able to meet with folks in person at 1025 N. Smith Road, I am also so impressed with how the staff, volunteer leadership, and our congregation as a whole are stepping up to the challenge of “doing church” during this time. With Sunday worship, Thursday night vespers, committee meetings and program offerings (Transitions, the Neo-Paganism class, book group, 20’s/30’s group, and RE story time as examples), and opportunities to connect through online conversations (Tea/Coffee with Hilary, Lunch with the Staff, After Work Chill Time, Brunch with the Board), we’ve got so much going on that we now have 2 Zoom accounts! I’m not sure if everyone is aware how much preparation goes on behind-the-scenes to keep things going, but suffice it to say it takes considerable work and time on the part of staff and volunteers to pull this off. I am more grateful than ever for my church community!

While we are continuing to worship, study, and connect with each other, albeit in new ways, there are some financial challenges that we will be facing. One example of this is the income we used to collect from outside groups who rented our facility and are now not able to meet there, which could be the scenario for quite some time. The Board has found ways to decrease expenses (as an example, we put our garbage collection on hold for the time being since we are not meeting in the building) and to increase income (for instance, you will see in this newsletter some great Fun-raising activities that are upcoming). In this latter category, we have had some families come forward to increase their annual pledge for the 20-21 fiscal year - for those who are able to do so, this is greatly appreciated.

Hopefully, you were able to read the message from Rev. Hilary and me that was sent via email on April 21 in which we mentioned that the Board has been researching options for how best to hold our annual meeting and to conduct a vote on our leadership slate and the budget for next fiscal year. I would like to share some information with you about what we have decided:

- our church by-laws state that our annual meeting is to occur at least 30 days before the new fiscal year begins on July 1;
- in order to allow sufficient time to prepare to conduct an online meeting rather than an on-site one, we have decided to hold the annual meeting on Sunday, May 31 following the 10 a.m. worship service (the meeting was originally scheduled for May 17);
- due to the constraints inherent in a Zoom format, this year’s annual meeting will be a presentation (with visual aids) by the Board. The presentation will be recorded and will be available for viewing beginning the following day, both for those who were unable to "attend" the meeting and those who would like to review the presentation;
- among the items covered by the presentation will be the announcement of the leadership slate (which was published in the April Focus), a "state of the operation" budget summary for the current fiscal year, and a proposed budget for the first 6 months of the 20-21 fiscal year (due to the prevalence of unknowns in regards to the pandemic, the Board has decided to start with a half-year budget that can then be adjusted for the second half of the church year as we have more information to work with);
- due to the logistics of holding the annual meeting via a Zoom format, questions and comments from members of the congregation will not occur at the actual meeting this year. Instead, there will be a series of smaller Zoom sessions held during the week immediately following the annual meeting (June 1-6, with a 2nd week scheduled if needed)

(continued next page...)
Minister’s Muse
Well, I’ve just finished drying my eyes after weeping over Some Good News from John Krasinski. I can’t believe I’m writing that, but it’s true. I saw the story of a caregiver for an elderly man in Lancashire, England, who made him a pillow with his wife’s picture on it, since he slept with a photo of her every night since her passing and began weeping. Then, when the story came on about Krasinski taking people’s recipes and having them cooked by famous chefs on zoom, I just kept weeping. Don’t worry, that’s not what I’m spending all my time doing. I read two more chapters in the book “Black Walden” by Elise Lemire – a sobering and remarkable book about the history of slavery in Concord, MA. (Thanks for a good recommendation, Dr. Mary!) Anyway, it’s Monday – my day off – so I should stop feeling guilty.

Oh – where was I – right – Some Good News! Our good news is that the people of CCUU care about one another. Since sheltering in place began, there’ve been so many donations to the Ministers Discretionary Fund (MDF), that I need to remind you it’s not just here for contribution (our budget needs more help than the MDF, right now), it’s here to help people. I’m sure that people are struggling in our congregation, but I don’t often hear from those who might really need financial help.

I know that reaching out and asking isn’t easy. I saw that when I arrived here in 2008 to find a congregation hard hit by economic downturn. Some of us, including myself, have had the ripples of that downturn affect us for years.

Sometimes we can still carry on with life in economic straits. We’re not always living paycheck to paycheck or worrying about paying medical bills or rent or the mortgage – though getting kids through college can be pretty scary. But, often, I’ve provided people with rent help, help for medicine, respite care, getting caught up with a few bills, or supplementing trips to the food bank with actual grocery credits.

We set up a phone network to make sure that we stay in touch, to discover who needs help, and to strengthen the bonds of kinship. I know that, by and large, we’ve been lucky in this congregation. Some have lost jobs but have resources set aside. Others have lost retirement funds but have time to work and make up some of those losses. Many simply hope for the best when the economy “restarts” - whatever that looks like.

The MDF isn’t there for casual assistance, but it’s provided real help in desperate times. It is here for our people now. I promise to ask again if the fund gets low, but, for right now, I just need you to have courage when you actually need help, to reach out to me – to your own congregation. As homemade signs say all over the place, “we’re all in this together.” I’m pretty sure that that’s the only way we’re going to make it through.

Of course, these are hard and uncertain times, but I am certain that the model of every person for themselves is no longer going to work. It really never has. It’s always advantaged some, while leaving others in harsh struggle. I am certain that a key lesson of the pandemic, at its heart, is that we are all in this together.

This is a strong congregation with real heart and strong spirit. I see that on Sundays, when larger numbers

(continued…)

From Your Board President (cont’d)

- These sessions will be led by Board members and notes will be taken, with questions, answers, and concerns from all the Zoom sessions then compiled into a summary to be shared with the congregation. Information will follow about how to sign up for the Zoom sessions, which will include both daytime and evening options;
- this year, voting on the leadership slate and the proposed 6-month budget will occur via an online Google form ballot (paper ballots will be mailed to those who do not have internet access).

Our aim in putting this process together is to:
- follow our by-laws;
- provide the congregation with information as to the state of our operations going into the next fiscal year;
- allow for questions to be asked and answered;
- honor our 5th UU Principle (the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and the society at large);
- care for the health of our congregation during a time of critical physical distancing.

So please mark your calendar for May 31 following worship for our annual meeting - - and stay tuned for more information!

As always, please feel free to contact me at prez@ccuu.org. Stay safe and Stay connected! …duRee

Brunch with the Board
Saturdays, 10:00 am
Please join some members of your Board of Trustees this Saturday morning at 10:00 for Brunch with the Board. This is an opportunity for you to ask questions, share concerns and suggestions, and check in to see how things are going. If you’re not able to participate this week, there will be other Saturday mornings available to you, so stay tuned! To join the meeting:
- go to https://zoom.us/j/94650441844?pwd=bkNMeWlpZndQWDBXeIlNQTghR0FBUT09, or
- to join by phone, dial 1-312-626-6799 and when prompted, enter meeting i.d. 946 5044 1844, password 415024

Minister’s Muse (cont’d)

than ever tune in to and help out on services and stay behind for coffee hour. I see it in the strength of our lay ministry team. Of course, I see it in the adaptive and hard work of our staff. I know that when we’re able to come back together, we will be stronger than ever -- because, right now, we know that we’re all in this together. We’re here for each other. We’re here for you. …Hilary

Minister’s Office Hours
I am available Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and most Sunday afternoons for one-on-one appointments. Call 847-359-8440 x2 to talk or to make an appointment for a phone or Zoom or Skype one-on-one meeting.
Join the Virtual Fun-raising & Fellowship!

Look for a series of virtual events in the coming weeks to bring the CCUU community together during this unprecedented time. Details about the first two are below.

**CCUU Virtual Garage Sale**

This is a private Facebook group for members to post/sell household items while raising funds for our programs. We expect lots of activity within the group as many people are already using their time at home to sort and clear out unwanted and no-longer needed items. Maybe you were inspired by Rev. Scot Giles recent sermon "Conquering Clutter." Details will be available shortly on the CCUU Facebook page [https://www.facebook.com/CountrysideChurchUnitarianUniversalist/](https://www.facebook.com/CountrysideChurchUnitarianUniversalist/)

Some basic rules for the group are:

- Transactions, including payment, pick-up/delivery options, etc. handled directly between seller/buyer. (Be sure to follow the latest guidelines for physical distancing, etc.)
- Sellers post photos of the actual item being sold (no catalog or online photo) along with description (i.e. condition, age, color, size/dimensions) and other pertinent details. All posts must include price.
- Seller to remove items or indicate "Sold" when item is no longer available.
- Finally, as this is a fundraiser, seller agrees to donate at least 50% of funds garnered through sale of items to CCUU

**Brave Bellies for the Benefit of CCUU**

**Tues, May 19 at 7 pm**

Tired of being stuck inside? Feel your muscles and joints getting stiffer day by day? Or maybe you've always been interested in trying Middle Eastern and World dance, but just didn't feel comfortable stepping out in a class of strangers. Perhaps you just want to do something fun and different that will also help out your spiritual family. Whatever your motivation, now is your opportunity!

Mari Peckham (you might know her from the Time and Talent auction or an occasional worship service reading) is hosting a class to meet all those needs and more! With her background in Middle Eastern and World dance styles, she will be offering an experience that will get you moving, stretch you out, get your joints lubricated, and raise your spirits in a safe community of friends...all from the comfort of your own home!

This class will be offered on a recurring basis, if there is enough interest. To join Mari’s zoom meeting on May 19 at 7 pm:

- go to [https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84086451499?pwd=MTRBU0F3cztWN2hvOFJtdkTWUdaUT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84086451499?pwd=MTRBU0F3cztWN2hvOFJtdkTWUdaUT09), or
- go to [www.zoom.us](http://www.zoom.us), click ‘Join a meeting,’ and enter meeting ID: 840 8645 1499 and password: helpccuu

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**In Memoriam**

**John Denny**

**July 6, 1924—March 31, 2002**

John was Music Director at CCUU from December 1986—June 2005. He was an accomplished musician and passionate composer. John moved to Brownsville, Texas six years ago to be closer to his sister Susan and her husband, Glen Rutherford. He is also survived by his daughter, Cynthia Jo Miller, in Denton, TX. He was predeceased by his wife Leila and his son Larry Dale Denny.

John’s music was a great gift to this congregation, and he is remembered with love and gratitude. A memorial will be held as soon as we determine whether we will wait or hold it via Zoom. Any memorial will include a celebration of his music.

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**Help Countryside’s Prairie**

We’re looking for a few volunteers to help clean up the prairie beside the church. Parents & kids would be welcome. A max of 1-2 hours is all that would be needed. No gardening skills required, and you can work alone to keep safe physical distance. To volunteer & to receive some simple instructions, please contact Peggy Simonsen, 847-358-1019 or Simonsen.Peggy@gmail.com.

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**Conversations with Staff & One Another**

It’s important for us to keep in touch with one another during this time. You will need the password 1025 for these online gatherings.

- Tuesdays, 10-11 am: Tea-Coffee with Rev. Hilary & with one another. *Bring a cuppa* and we'll relax and get caught up, reduce isolation. Go to [https://zoom.us/j/184024282 or call* 1-312-626-6799 and enter meeting ID 184 024 282](https://zoom.us/j/184024282 or call* 1-312-626-6799 and enter meeting ID 184 024 282)
- Wednesdays, 12-1 pm: Lunch with the CCUU Staff & one another. Go to [https://zoom.us/j/731839164 or call* 1-312-626-6799 and enter meeting ID 731 839 164](https://zoom.us/j/731839164 or call* 1-312-626-6799 and enter meeting ID 731 839 164)
- Wednesdays, 6-7 pm: After Work Chill Time. Go to [https://zoom.us/j/232840740 or call* 1-312-626-6799 and enter meeting ID 232 840 740](https://zoom.us/j/232840740 or call* 1-312-626-6799 and enter meeting ID 232 840 740)

*The phone number listed for the Zoom meetings is for the Chicago area. If you need a phone number outside the Chicago area, go to [https://zoom.us/u/ac5VDMxXtA](https://zoom.us/u/ac5VDMxXtA) to find your local number.

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**Schedule Change beginning May 18**

- Lunch with the Staff will be on Tuesdays, 12-1 pm
- Tea-Coffee with Hilary will be on Wednesdays, 10-11 am
- After Work Chill Time will continue on Wednesdays, 6-7 pm

Our plan is to maintain the same zoom meeting ids as listed above; that will be confirmed in the Weekly Update on May 13.
Hear Ye! Hear Ye!

While we are sheltering in place, we are missing some events that can’t be entirely celebrated virtually, and one of those events would be celebrating an important achievement on the part of our Director of Lifespan Religious Education, Dr. Mary Shelden. Mary came to us with a strong background and experience in education, in Unitarian Universalism, and in Unitarian Universalist Religious Education. However, she had been working on achieving credentialing in Unitarian Universalist Religious Education for the last few years and she received her approval just this past month from the Religious Education Credentialing Committee.

Normally, we’d all be headed to General Assembly and we would watch her receiving her credentialing formally at the Service of the Living Tradition. But that's not happening this year. In addition, we’d have an opportunity, altogether in the worship service, to celebrate her achievement. Most of you probably remember that we were able to recognize our Music Director, Alison Vernon, when she received her credentialing as a Unitarian Universalist Credentialed Musician. We were able to celebrate her in person, give her a gift, and show the pride on our faces.

When it is safe in the future to get together in person, we will have an opportunity to show the same joy, pride, and appreciation for Mary Shelden. In the meantime, we wanted you to know that she has pursued her certification with hard work and has had resounding success, and we congratulate her. These staff members not only bring new training and experience to us, not only go the extra many miles to achieve even higher professional goals and to connect us with valuable networks of UU professionals, their excellence also reflects upon this congregation, helping us to be a congregation that shines out. Thank you and Congratulations, Dr. Mary Shelden!

Soul Connections LGBTQ
New Affinity Group Forming
Mon, May 18, 7 pm

In response to needs voiced by congregants, we are forming an affinity group for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and non-binary, and queer-identified folks. Beginning May 18 and meeting monthly or twice monthly, as members determine, this new group will be facilitated by Matt Reuter-Bowers and Kim Cecil, with Mary Shelden sitting in as things get rolling. The group will begin in a Zoom format for the time being. We hope all LGBTQ congregants aged 18 and older will feel welcome to attend!

This will be a Soul Connections group like our others because at its heart, small group ministry is all about connecting with other people, in this case, with LGBTQ people participating. It will not be a curriculum about LGBTQ experiences, rather a place where these can surface as folk do spiritual work and connect with each other. Our hope is that this approach will strengthen each participant on a personal level, enrich our discussions as a group, and bring more focused spiritual development to the group experience. For more info about Soul Connections generally, go to http://ccuu.org/soulconnections/. If interested in participating or for further info, please contact Mary Shelden, DLRE@ccuu.org.

Story Time with Mary
Tuesdays, 7 pm

Our group of young story-timers is growing! Join us for stories in a contemplative spirit. All ages welcome! See the CCUU Family Ministry Facebook group for additional materials and info. To join the Zoom Story Time:
- go to https://zoom.us/j/696169946?
pwd=MylLWFFIak5HeVlvTnbOujBV0vzUT09
- Or by phone: 1-312-626-6799, meeting ID: 696 169 946, password: CCUAthome

CCUU Families, Join us on Facebook

Mary has been posting activity suggestions and just plain fun stuff on the CCUU Family Ministry Facebook group. This is a closed group. To request to join the group, go to https://www.facebook.com/groups/1821210571463096/

A Bookmark in our Journeys Retreat
(This info is reprinted from recent Weekly Updates & LRE Updates, for those who might have missed it)

Our Journeys Retreat was originally scheduled for April 24-25, and instead of holding it online, we decided to postpone. The bookmark image below has the kinds of activities we have in mind for our face-to-face retreat—try them at home! Feel free to print out this bookmark for use with any book; one we especially recommend for our eventual retreat is Active Hope: How to Face the Mess We’re In without Going Crazy by Joanna Macy & Chris Johnstone (https://www.activehope.info/index.html).
Sunday Worship Service, Children’s Chapel, & Coffee Hour  
**Sundays at 10:00 am**

We are currently live streaming our worship services via Zoom. To join the service:
- go to https://bit.ly/CCUUsvc or
- go to https://zoom.us/, click on ‘Join a Meeting’ at the top of the page, you will then be asked for the meeting id: 412 124 873 and password 1025, or
- phone 1-312-626-6799 and when prompted, use meeting id 412 124 873, pwd 1025.

**Children’s Chapel follows the Message for All Ages**

After the Message for All Ages, young people are invited to join Children’s Chapel. To join Chapel:
- go to https://bit.ly/CCUUchapel or
- go to https://zoom.us/, click on ‘Join a Meeting’ at the top of the page, enter meeting id 414 594 483 and password CHAPEL, or
- phone 1-312-626-6799, meeting id 414 594 483, pwd CHAPEL.

You might want to set up a computer that is tuned into the regular worship service and in another room, set up a computer that is tuned to the Children’s Chapel.

**Junior and Senior High**

Our Junior and Senior High Youth have been meeting via Zoom. Parents, check your email for information regarding meetings, and if your young person isn’t yet involved and would like to be, email Mary Shelden, DLRE@ccuu.org

**Sunday Virtual Coffee Hour at 11 am**

Following the Sunday morning worship service, we are having an online coffee hour. It is a separate Zoom meeting, so to join, at the end of worship,
- go to https://bit.ly/CCUUcoffee or
- go to https://zoom.us/, click on ‘Join a Meeting’ at the top of the page, you will then be asked for the meeting and enter meeting id 660 788 034, pwd 31415, or
- call 1-312-626-6799, meeting id 660 788 034, pwd 31415.

For Coffee Hour, we are using a Zoom tool called Breakout Rooms, which allows us to gather in smaller groups than the 150ish households that have been joining us for worship. We will also have optional discussion questions or topics for those who might like help having conversation with someone new.

*The phone number listed for the Zoom meetings is for the Chicago area. If you need a phone number outside the Chicago area, go to https://zoom.us/u/ac5VDmxWI4A to find your local number.

**Weekly Online Vespers Service**

**Thursdays at 7 pm**

This is a short (about 30 mins) meditation service. https://zoom.us/j/402521324 or call* 1-312-626-6799 and enter meeting id 402 521 324.

**CCUU Choir**  
**Online Gathering**  
**Thursdays, 7:30 pm**

To join the meeting, go to https://zoom.us/j/112477318, or to join by phone, dial 1-312-626-6799 and when prompted, enter meeting i.d. 112 477 318.

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**Zoom How-Tos for joining online worship & meetings**  

In addition, our Tech Team members have offered to help those who need help learning the ins and outs of navigating a Zoom meeting. They can set up one-on-one help sessions or small group tutorials, depending what is needed. If you would like help, please email TechHelp@ccuu.org.

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**Donating to CCUU during this time**

Knowing that this is a time of challenge for everyone, we are grateful for ongoing and additional support from members and friends of Countryside Church Unitarian Universalist. To sustain our programs and our staff, to strengthen infrastructure, to offer a richness of familiar services, to strengthen our presence in a fractured world, and to innovate new ways of connecting, we hope that you will extend support to CCUU. Whether member or friend, pledger or regular contributor, or someone who never before realized how much you need the kind of connection, principles, support, ethics, and vision that CCUU and Unitarian Universalism offer -- this is the time to give -- even to give a little more than you thought possible.

For information about how to donate, please go to [http://ccuu.org/donate/](http://ccuu.org/donate/).

As always, reach out to Rev. Hilary, if you need help.
Meet Us Online...

**Online Journaling Circle**  
*1st & 3rd Thursdays, 10 am*  
During this stay-at-home time, we are meeting via Zoom twice/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 deep relationships within our community. Have your notebook/journal and a pen ready & join us online for personal exploration and growth.

To join us on the 1st Thursday of the month:
- Go to [https://zoom.us/j/215537179](https://zoom.us/j/215537179)
- Or to participate by phone, call 1-312-626-6799 and when prompted, enter meeting id 215 537 179

To join us on the 3rd Thursday of the month:
- go to [https://zoom.us/j/215537179](https://zoom.us/j/215537179)
- or to participate by phone, call 1-312-626-6799 and when prompted, enter meeting id 215 537 179

**Atheist, Humanist, Agnostic Discussion ~ Monday May 11, 7 pm**  
*Note: We are meeting the 2nd Monday rather than our typical 2nd Tuesday, due to the church zoom accounts already having two meetings (current limit) scheduled on the Tuesday.* Ed Maryon will present on the topic of Creating and modifying living things: Human acquisition of God-like powers or 21st century advances in biology and genetics. To join the discussion:
- go to [https://zoom.us/j/96091721456?pwd=ZVJDRGZEeG05V2p0ejJ0dNQdU92Zz09](https://zoom.us/j/96091721456?pwd=ZVJDRGZEeG05V2p0ejJ0dNQdU92Zz09) or
- call 312 626 6799 and when prompted, enter meeting id 960 9172 1456 and password 888362.

**Women 60+ Building a Village**  
*Thurs, May 14, 10 am*  
Countryside offers women 60 years and older a place where we can build our own village. We have been discussing Women Rowing North by Mary Pipher. We are currently meeting via Zoom. To join:
- go to [https://zoom.us/j/735955994](https://zoom.us/j/735955994) or
- call 312 626 6799 and when prompted, enter meeting id 735 955 994.

**20-30 Somethings**  
Our group has a Discord server (basically a closed social media app). It is a place to group text, drop memes and articles, check in with each other, etc. In addition to communicating via Discord, we are also meeting:
- Saturdays at 3 pm for a weekly Zoom check in and chat
- 1st Sunday of the month after the morning worship service.

If you are in your 20s or 30s and are interested in joining us, email 2030s@ccuuc.org for more info.

**Open Forum Discussion**  
Please join us 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.

**Sundays at 9 am**
- go to [https://zoom.us/j/707848506](https://zoom.us/j/707848506)
- or to participate by phone, call 1-312-626-6799 and when prompted, enter meeting id 707848506.

**Wednesdays at 7 pm**
- go to [https://zoom.us/j/655214636?pwd=V1p5ajFsRnVV2JXWHpNbDRoV3pLZz09](https://zoom.us/j/655214636?pwd=V1p5ajFsRnVV2JXWHpNbDRoV3pLZz09)
- to join by phone, dial 1-312-626-6799 and when prompted, enter meeting i.d. 655 214 636 and password 329590

**Transitions ~ Thurs, May 28, 10 am**
We will meet again via Zoom. This month, Janet and Jim Simmons will present a short introduction followed by the facilitation of an interactive discussion of the topic “Lessons From My Parents,” during which they'll encourage attendees to share their thoughts and memories with the group. To join the discussion:
- Go to [https://zoom.us/j/326203136](https://zoom.us/j/326203136), or
- Phone 1-312-626-6799 and enter meeting ID 326 203 136

**Mondays Book Group ~ June 1, 7 pm**  
**NOTE: Instead of meeting on Memorial Day, we will meet the 1st Monday in June.** Join us online June 1 to discuss The Testaments by Margaret Atwood. To join us,
- go to [https://zoom.us/j/186684346?pwd=ZE1JbkpFTjBwTnVsBCt5MThQcXFkQnT09](https://zoom.us/j/186684346?pwd=ZE1JbkpFTjBwTnVsBCt5MThQcXFkQnT09)
- or call 1-312-626-6799 and enter meeting id 186 684 346, password 903791.

**Book Circle ~ June 7, 6:30 pm**  
Join the Book Circle to discuss The Nature Fix: Why Nature Makes Us Happier, Healthier, and More Creative by Florence Williams. We hope to meet in person, but if not, we will meet via Zoom. Details will be provided closer to the date.

**To Schedule a Zoom Meeting for Your Group**  
Email [Office@ccuuc.org](mailto:Office@ccuuc.org) or call 847-359-8440 ext 1

**Have a Smart Phone or Tablet?**  
Download the free Breeze CHMS (church management system) app! Once downloaded, the church ID is CCUUC. Check your giving and access the church directory right from your phone.
Thanks to the generosity and follow-through of our financial donors, and a good head start at the Time and Talent Auction last fall, we are currently financially prepared to house a family in Chalice House for at least one year. In other words, we have the money in hand to replace the lost rental income in Countryside’s budget for at least a full year. Additionally, we have commitments to provide financial support for a second year as well. That gives us the confidence to continue to move forward with Chalice House despite the drastic change in economic conditions.

**Property Improvements Underway**

As planned, at the beginning of April our tenant in the house on the north side of Countryside’s property moved to her new home. With the property vacant, our repairs team (Alan Johnson, Jeff Phillips, and Andrew Sinclair-Georges) swooped in to do a more complete assessment and prioritize the work that is needed. We have a $6,000 grant that will cover the vast majority, if not all, of the work, including new flooring, new carpeting, interior painting, and a myriad of repairs, from drywall to doorknobs. Other repairs have been noted and scheduled for 2021/2022.

With unexpected COVID-19 and physical distancing measures keeping us from hosting volunteer work days, we took some time to think through how to move forward with volunteer and contractor safety the top priority. Bottom line, we determined that we need to keep the total number of volunteers to a minimum. To that end:

- Alan negotiated contracts for new carpet and vinyl flooring and will oversee installation during this week.
- A vast amount of work has been completed or is underway by Jeff and Andrew with expert consultation and roll-your-sleeves-up work by Lois Phillips. [Watch this video](http://clipartmag.com/download-cl) for a tour of the home as of April 27.
- Paint crews (John Evans, the McDonnells, and two teams from our community partners) are scheduled to come in, one team at a time, throughout May.
- Outdoor work on the patio and gardens is being led by Judy Ball with consultation from Judy Miller, and a small work crew is getting underway now. Small ponds have been drained, shrubs have been pruned, dandelions have been pulled, and many more tasks are being tackled.
- Sue Montgomery is refurbishing an old wrought iron bench, and Mary and the youth are hoping to take on the refurbishing of an old wooden bench, both for the patio area.
- Deep cleaning of the bathrooms and kitchen will be done by a professional cleaning crew.

So, despite the fact that the crew is small, it is mighty, and Countryside is going to have a vastly-improved home ready for a family to move into by sometime in June.

**Help Wanted**

**Furnishings and supplies:** Many people have already offered to help furnish the home, and we will be emailing those individuals very soon with our plan for accepting and/or picking up the donations in accordance with physical distancing measures. In the meantime, we have identified a few more needs ranging from a mattress to potting soil. Please take a look at the list and if you can help, sign up here: [https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a044ea4a72fa13-chalice](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a044ea4a72fa13-chalice).

**Pickup and Delivery:** Delivery of furnishings and other donations is tentatively planned for the last few days of May. We are looking for 1 – 2 heavy lifters to help move furniture into the home, and 2 strong people with a truck who can help pick up donations if the donor is unable to deliver. Face masks will be used and physical distancing guidelines will be followed. If you can help, please contact us at ChaliceHouse@CCUU.org.

**Stay involved**

We will have a Chalice House core team meeting on May 9th with an update on the work that has been completed so far and to discuss/assign our final tasks before the home is ready for a new family. Please feel free to join us:

- Zoom: [https://zoom.us/j/94394042319?pwd=Y2daMkpxCUXZyZBPdjhiMTZKcTvumUT09](https://zoom.us/j/94394042319?pwd=Y2daMkpxCUXZyZBPdjhiMTZKcTvumUT09) or by phone: 1-312-626-6799; meeting ID: 943 9404 2319, password: 288655

Finally, we expect to have a training session via Zoom sometime in May for the hospitality team (specifically the mentors) and anyone who is interested in learning more about the social services provided by ICDI and how we will manage the relationship with our new tenants. Stay tuned.

We are grateful beyond words for all the support – physical, financial, moral, and spiritual! Questions? Please contact Laura Mandell and Christine Organ at ChaliceHouse@ccuu.org.
Partners for Our Communities (POC)
From POC’s website (www.poc.news): As the United States shuts down for COVID-19, POC cannot. We had to cancel our major Fund-Raising Jubilee scheduled for May 9th, and we have had to cut back on some of our programs, but we can’t eliminate them all. Many families in the surrounding communities count on POC for continued support in times of crisis. We are receiving many calls and questions about what this crisis means to a parent in poverty. Individuals isolated due to language have serious questions that if unanswered could be critical. We are running on a skeleton staff of bilingual community navigators and liaisons and youth development staff with the Executive Director working alongside each. We are practicing social distancing, curbside pick up and drop off of food and community resources. Other non-crucial staff is working from home. We have been mobilizing people and donations, and communicating with partnering agencies to best serve these truly vulnerable children and families.

Outreach Steering Council (OSC) has been in contact with POC to see if we might help with any needs in their community. If you can help in any of the ways listed below, please drop things off at POC (1585 N Rand Rd) on Thursdays between 10 am and Noon—12. If you can’t make it there then, make arrangements to drop things at the home of Janet McDonnell or Laura Mandell, and we will be sure to get them to POC

- **Mask-Making Supplies Needed!** The women in the ROLE program are sewing masks for local needs, but they are in desperate need of either 1/4 inch elastic or bias binding that they can use for the ties. Both are pretty much unavailable in stores and online — but maybe you have some stashed in your closet? They are also in need of donations of fabric. Thank you for supporting our partner and our health care workers!
- **Food & Sundry needs:** As of about a week ago, their greatest need is for Canned Tuna, White Rice, Canned Fruit, Macaroni & Cheese. They are also in need of quarters, laundry soap, stable pantry foods, and masks. They are also accepting monetary donations on their website.

**Wellness House**

**Online Offerings**

**Hypnosis Group & Reiki Sessions**
Wellness House has begun to successfully facilitate virtual programs for those in our area who have or have had cancer. For available remote programs, go to [https://wellnesshouse.org/virtual-programs/](https://wellnesshouse.org/virtual-programs/); their website will continue to be the best place to go for the most current information.

****Pollution Solutions**

**Thursday, May 14, 7 - 9 pm**

An online meeting to discuss ways YOU can help the planet sponsored by the Sierra Club Northwest Cook County Group and League of Women Voters of the Palatine Area. Panelists & Topics:

- Natalie Lichtenbert (Chair, Hoffman Estates Sustainability Commission and more): Single-use plastics
- Renee Blue and Jennifer Kainz (founders of Mindful Waste): Food waste
- Cindy Skrukrud (Clean Water Organizer, Sierra Club Illinois Chapter): Water pollution

Free and Open to the Public. Bring Your Questions. REGISTER: [https://act.sierraclub.org/events/details?formcampaignid=7013q000002CKa7AAG](https://act.sierraclub.org/events/details?formcampaignid=7013q000002CKa7AAG)
UU the Vote

How We Thrive: a LIVE Virtual Event
Tues, May 12, 6-8 pm CDT

What does it mean to practice our principles during a pandemic? What are we doing to guarantee free and fair elections in states targeted by voter suppression?

How is UU the Vote rising to the challenges of COVID-19, while creating a movement towards UU values in the 2020 elections?

Join us LIVE for a special update from UU the Vote. This event will feature musicians from across the country, a message from UUA President Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray, and opportunities for you to get involved and make meaningful impacts in 2020!

To register, go to: https://secure.everyaction.com/Q7gy-XyC2ke12BvUwlmgLQ02?emci=4c304dbc-ae85-ea11-a94c-00155d03b1e8&emdi=0f523e4b-3a86-ea11-a94c-00155d03b1e8&ceid=2440645

UU the Vote is a non-partisan faith initiative, in partnership with broader justice movements, to engage our neighbors, educate our communities, mobilize voters, and rally around key ballot initiatives. Join with your UU community to create a future defined by love, justice, and faith. #Votelove

UUAs for Social Justice

Spring Quarter Meeting
Sun, May 17, 2 pm
2-3:25: Program on Criminal Justice: Where Do We Go from Here?

Evan Freund, chair of UUSJ’s Interfaith Criminal Justice Task Force (ICJTF) will lead the presentation. ICJTF advocates with other city-wide coalitions such as the Community Renewal Society, UU Advocacy Network of Illinois (UUANI,) and UU Prison Ministry of Illinois (UUPMI) to enact legislative change and promote equity in justice processes. Working from a faith-based perspective, we aim to humanize people who have offended, to find alternatives to prosecution, to showcase the reformation and accomplishments of inmates, and to support rejoining citizens in finding productive work in society. We advocate for justice systems which embody these precepts and work to dismantle systems, many based on wealth, that dehumanize accused and convicted individuals.

The meeting will be held via Zoom:
- go to www.zoom.us, select ‘Join a Meeting,’ and enter meeting id 784 725 869 and password 592 586, or
- Call in to 312-626-6799 and use the meeting id & password listed above.

3:30-5: UUSJ Board Meeting
This is an open meeting, so any interested person may attend.
More info: www.uusforsocialjustice.org

UUAs General Assembly will be Virtual

General Assembly (GA) is the annual meeting of our Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). Participants worship, witness, learn, connect, and make policy for the Association through democratic process. The UUA Board of Trustees has passed a resolution to make the 2020 General Assembly a 100% virtual event. This decision alleviates the anxiety and concern shared by many about how GA might proceed given the impact of COVID-19. It also gives the Association time to plan a more robust and rewarding virtual experience.

For many years, the UUA has offered virtual attendance as an option and, this year, they will scale and enhance their technology to accommodate a wider, ideally more global, audience. Across the country, UU congregations have embraced virtual meetings and Sunday services and the number of screens that log in has grown each week. We are excited for what lies ahead.

Registration for Virtual GA is $150/person. For more info and to register, go to https://www.uua.org/ga.

UUANI Action of the Week

Now that our national legislators are coming back to work in Washington, let’s push for them to include in the new COVID-19 relief package economic support for immigrants and refugees. They have become an integral part of their communities, but have been left out of COVID-19 support efforts.

TAKE ACTION to urge your US senator and representative to include in the next COVID-19 relief package:
- Inclusion of hardworking struggling immigrant and refugee families in cash rebate payments, including individuals who file taxes with an ITIN;
- Provision that COVID-19 testing and treatment include immigrant communities, ensuring that emergency Medicaid covers testing and treatment;
- Automatic extension of work authorization and visa renewal deadlines for refugees and immigrants who are providing economic and recovery assistance to their communities.

We are all in this together — make sure we ALL feel included!

...UUANI Partnered with Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights

UUANI General Assembly will be Virtual

Virtual GA | June 24-28, 2020

Unitarian Universalist Advocacy Network of Illinois
Building Community for Justice
When encountering thresholds, we often talk as if our work is that of successfully “passing through” them. We speak of “making healthy transitions.” We seek out advice and support as we decide which thresholds to lean into and which to resist. The goal, it would seem, is figuring out how to travel forward in the right way.

But what if the true invitation of a threshold is not to successfully move from here to there, but instead to just sit and pause? What if we saw thresholds as resting places rather than as those moving walkways that transport us through airports? What if thresholds help us “become” by asking us to just “be” for a while? No moving. Just noticing and naming. Less traveling and more listening.

One of our Soul Matters ministers, the Rev. Sara LaWall, gets at this when she writes, “A [threshold is] a space to imagine a new way, and new self. Not moving or pushing but sitting and cultivating… [the goal] is to allow you space and time to reflect on your past, present, and future. To imagine a new beginning.”

And that imagining and naming may be more powerful than we usually assume. From the outside, it may seem that nothing has changed in our lives, and yet once that imaging takes shape in our minds and hearts, nothing is ever the same. The idea, the dream, the recognition suddenly takes on gravity. And that gravity creates an inevitability that transforms us, sometimes whether we like it or not.

Here’s how the writer Gary Zukav puts it, “At that moment [of realization], a threshold is crossed. What seemed unthinkable becomes thinkable… Once that realization has emerged, you can either honor it or ignore it, but you cannot forget it. What has become known cannot become unknown again.”

So friends, maybe our question this month isn’t “Are you ready to change?” but “How have you already changed?” How have you already passed through? How is your “threshold work” the work of noticing a shift inside you that has already occurred?

There is, after all, no forgetting it. Only living it. And letting it live in us.

**Questions for Considering Thresholds**

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”? What is that question trying to get you to notice or acknowledge? 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 was your favorite threshold time in your life?
   - How are you honoring the joy and gift of that time in your life right now?
2. Who taught you the most about leaping through and trusting thresholds?
3. You’ve left that door open for a long time now. What keeps coming through hasn’t been good for your soul for a while. What help do you need to finally close that door shut and lock it tight?
4. Looking back on the last major threshold you crossed, was there something you now wish you’d brought along? Or maybe something you wish you’d left back there?
5. What is your next challenge in daring to be human?
6. Who or what do you need to learn to love next?
7. What door have you not opened for a while? What room in your life has grown dusty and needs a visit?
8. What new creation wants to be born in and through you?
9. What new threshold is your awareness of white supremacy calling you to travel through?
10. Are you good at making graceful exits? Or is your style one of slipping out the door without anyone noticing? Or maybe even thundering out of the room?
11. What if thresholds are meant to rest in, not rush through?
12. How would someone be able to tell that you’ve made a journey through a spiritual threshold?
13. Is it time to turn from wishing you could have a new beginning to working on making a new ending?
14. Were you a child that loved to visit dark attics and basements? Or were you the kid who would do anything to avoid it? How about today? Do the attics and basements of your life lure you or scare you?
15. So you’ve made the journey over that threshold. How are you now supporting those who are still on the other side? The ones still working to make it over?
16. Has the pain of continuing exceeded the pain of stopping?

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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/](http://ccuu.org/soulconnections/)*

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**Get daily inspiration** on the monthly theme by liking the CCUU Facebook page: [https://www.facebook.com/pages/Countryside-Church-Unitarian-Universalist/218478024883750](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Countryside-Church-Unitarian-Universalist/218478024883750)

**Find musical inspiration** on each theme by following the monthly playlists on

- Spotify: [https://www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com/spotify-lists.html](https://www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com/spotify-lists.html)
- YouTube: [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCL_fSD0_Ps01GauCVL_mKO/playlists](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCL_fSD0_Ps01GauCVL_mKO/playlists)

**Find support for bringing the monthly themes into your family life** with Soulful Home: A Guide for Families: [www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com/soulful-home.html](http://www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com/soulful-home.html)
2020-21 Leadership Slate

Listed here is the slate of candidates put forth by the Nominating Committee for the upcoming church year. It was originally announced in an email on April 16.

**The church membership will vote at the Annual Meeting on Sunday, May 31 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

**Board of Trustees**
Nominees for the Board of Trustees:

- President-elect: Tom Dempsey [1-yr term as President-elect, will then serve a 2-year term as President]
- Vice President: Kathi Hillyer [1st year of second 2-year term as VP]
- Trustee: Chris Hitchcock [1st year of second 2-year term]
- Trustee: Tim Reuter-Bowers [1st year of 2-year term]
- Trustee: Denise Sepos [1st year of 2-year term]

Continuing on the Board of Trustees:

- President: duRee Bryant [2nd year of 2-year term]
- Secretary: CarolAnn Shindelar [2nd year of 2-year term]
- Treasurer: Marcus White [2nd year of second 2-year term]
- Trustee: Joy Simon [2nd year of third 2-year term]
- Trustee: Leslie Vaughn [2nd year of 2-year term]

**Endowment Committee**

*From the By-Laws, Article VII, Sec 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.*

Nominees for the Endowment Committee:

1. Craig Wydell (1st year of 5-year term)

Continuing on the Endowment Committee:

2. Rem Stokes (2nd year of 5-year term)
3. Laura Corrigan (3rd year of 5-year term)
4. Mike Berry (4th year of 5-year term)
5. Tony Pretto (5th year of 5-year term)

**Nominating Committee**

*From the By-Laws, Article X-4 (as revised by congregational vote on 5-19-19): The Nominating Committee shall consist of five (5) to seven (7) members. Between four (4) and six (6) members shall be elected to 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. Elections shall be held 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.*

Nominee for the Nominating Committee:

1. Cheryl Murray [1st year of second 2-year term]

Continuing on the Nominating Committee:

1. John Alton [2nd year of 2-year term]
2. Barrie Burr [2nd year of 2-year term]
3. John Evans [2nd year of 2-year term]

We would like to thank those members who are completing their service for their commitment to the work of Countryside Church:

- Karen Epps – Board Member
- Vince Unger – Board Member
- Lois Phillips – Endowment Committee
- Karen Noorani – Nominating Committee
- Jeff Phillips – Nominating Committee
- Elizabeth Vesto – Board appointee to Nominating Committee
### 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
- May 27 (publ. Jun 3)
- July 1 (publ. July 8)
- July 29 (publ. Aug 5)

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.