Two weeks ago I read five Joys and Sorrows cards about the shooting at Marjorie Stoneman Douglas High School, the 18th school shooting since the beginning of 2018. All across the country, students are marching, organizing, and preparing to walk out of their schools on April 20th, the 19th anniversary of the Columbine shooting. More than 100,000 students have pledged already. There are some signs that the grief-stricken, angry, and impassioned high school students are beginning to influence the national debate, a debate where for years, no matter how many people died, no one has been able to dislodge the political power of the NRA, which seemed to only grow with each atrocity.

Out of the hundreds who attended the high school, it was a small group of students who began to speak. They are already being attacked by the far-right media as paid actors or plants by the left wing anti-gun movement. This is what happens now to anyone who questions the rising power of the right. If you are wondering what courage looks like, look at the faces of those young people.

Marjorie Stoneman Douglas (1890 -1998), the woman honored by the name of the school, was a fearless, life-long champion and activist for the rights of women and the environment.

We think that one person’s actions cannot make a difference. We think that those without power – young people, women, poor people – cannot make a difference. But if you look carefully at some of the most inspiring shifts in history, it is often one person, or a small group of people, courageously acting at a pivotal moment, who change everything. We just might be witnessing one of those moments now. As UUs, I hope each of us will find ways to support this moment, and the young people who are leading us.

I hope you also take a moment to read the Declaration Against Hate, Violence, and Injustice that a multi-faith and multi-racial group of multi-faith women ministers and faith leaders in this community just drafted and signed. It is our way of speaking out for life, and saying, “This must stop.” Look for opportunities to sign on in support of the Declaration, in the coming weeks.
DECLARATION AGAINST HATE, VIOLENCE, & INJUSTICE

We are a diverse ecumenical and interfaith group of women in faith leadership in East Central Illinois. We gather together for unity, purpose, interrelatedness, and moral consciousness. We collectively agree that any form of violence, hatred, racism, intolerance, and social injustice must be named and resisted. We must act courageously.

We commit to challenging the resurgence of groups in our communities and nation who are promoting dangerous, white supremacist, far-right ideologies. We speak out against words and actions that seek to demean, threaten, or devalue others in any way. As civil rights and non-violence champion Rosa Parks said, “I would like to be known as a person who is concerned about freedom and equality and justice and prosperity for all people.”

We commit to inspire ourselves and our communities to act from a spirit of love, justice, and radical hospitality. In this, we echo the commitments made by faith leaders in Charlottesville, VA: “We will stand firm in our pursuit of justice and the honoring of all peoples, and we will move forward together as one community, united in our common humanity as beloved of God” (Charlottesville Clergy Collective, 2017).

Together, let us take up the challenge with vigor, dignity, and compassion.


Sunday, March 4, 2018
“Living the Gift: Sacred Economics”
Rev. Florence Caplow

Every day we encounter economic ideas that we take for granted. But are these ideas accurate? Are they life-sustaining? Do they lead to a future we want? On our “Pledge Sunday” (the Sunday when all pledges to support UUCUC for the next year will be turned in – we hope!) let’s explore, with a playful spirit, some alternative ideas about what makes the world go ‘round. The UUCUC choir will be singing.

Sunday, March 11, 2018
“Embracing Change”
Rev. Florence Caplow

Change is inevitable, but our response to it is up to us. There have been many changes at UUCUC in the last few years, many changes in the lives of those of us here, and many changes in the world. How can we swim in the currents of change, with grace and willingness? The CrUUners and the Children’s Choir will be singing.

Sunday, March 18, 2018
“Worth and Dignity”
Sam Beshers and Jennifer Greene

Religion should be a prominent and positive part of public and political life. Separation of church and state is important, but the steps taken to avoid imposing Christianity on people of differing faiths and viewpoints have taken us too far in the other direction.

As UUs we believe in the inherent dignity and worth of every human. We will explore how this value can and should be at the center of our civic and political lives, and how a government based on such a principle might operate.

Sunday, March 25, 2018
“Universalism, Christianity, and the UU Church Today”
Lane Schwartz

The modern Unitarian Universalist Association grew out of the merger of the American Unitarian Association and the Universalist Church of America, a Christian Universalist denomination. We gather together in a building founded as a Universalist church. Many UUs grew up in various Christian denominations. Today we will delve into Christian Universalism and consider what place it might have in the modern UU church.

Being a Welcoming Congregation

Our church has been a “Welcoming Congregation” since 1999. You may have seen this designation on the banner of our newsletters or on a plaque in our church lobby, but what does this mean? It means we have worked and are working to make our church home open and supportive for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer people. We continue to learn about undoing homophobia and transphobia and opposing discrimination in our individual lives, our church community, and our society. We work to understand and honor our various identities, backgrounds, and experiences and to create a safe, inclusive space in which people of many different gender identities, sexual orientations, and gender expressions can come together.

Do you have some ideas of how we can continue this effort? We have an assessment team gathering information and proposing ways to improve our Welcoming Congregation work and would love to hear your thoughts. Please come and talk one of our team members: Jerry Carden, Jim Hannum, Katriena Knights, Kristi Mercer, Kathleen Robbins, Debbie Rugg, and Renée Trilling.
Join Us In Launching the Poor People’s Campaign at UUCUC

Fifty years ago, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King called for a Poor People’s Campaign to begin a “revolution of values” in America. He and other leaders invited people of all races and religions to unite against the evils of racism, poverty, and militarism.

But economic inequality has only accelerated since 1968, while voter suppression laws and mass incarceration further entrench systemic racism in America. Current governmental policies promote systemic racism, poverty, the war economy, and environmental destruction that threaten our people and planet, our democracy, and our national morality.

The Social Action Committee invites you to join a growing number of us as we prepare to participate in this year’s Poor People’s Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival. This campaign aims to build a broad and deep national moral movement – rooted in the leadership of poor people – to unite our country from the bottom up. It was officially launched earlier this month, and civil disobedience days are planned in capitol cities across the country from May until June 2018. The first will take place on Mother’s Day, and will address child poverty. Those interested in this campaign are planning events and activities at UUCUC that will lead up to these days, and help us effectively participate.

Are you interested in learning more or becoming involved? There is a place for everyone! Contact Pam Richart, Jan Kalmar, or Sherry Bohlen. We’re just getting started.

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UUCUC DEATH WITH DIGNITY GROUP PRESENTS...

*A Fascinating Set of Four Vignettes about Medical Decisions at the End of Life.*

Please mark your calendar and plan to join the Death with Dignity Group at UUCUC on Sunday, March 25, at 2:00 pm at the UU church for a 90-minute theatrical presentation “What Would You Do?”

Members of the Bloomington-Normal Heartland Theatre’s senior acting troupe “Young at Heartland” will be re-enacting four scenarios that illustrate medical decisions that families may face at some point in their lives. These choices are complex and often are made when emotions are hard to manage.

As the audience observes these scenes, they may discover a decision that seemed best may suddenly need to be re-evaluated. They will find their own feelings pulled into the lives being illustrated and will have a stake in each outcome. Being faced with real choices in the future may be made easier by facing those decisions through these powerful re-enactments.

**Play #1 'Hospital Hallway’** Diane Walker, John Ford

**Play #2 ‘Second Opinion’** Kathe Conley, Dave Lemmon, Wes Melton

**Play #3 'Phone Call’** Joyce Anderson, Bruce Boeck

**Play #4 'Brain Tumor’** Ann White, Wes Melton

This spring will mark the fifteenth year that “Young at Heartland” has been serving Central Illinois. This acting troupe of dedicated seniors spends four months a year in the classroom strengthening their acting skills and developing scenes. They then take their show “on the road”.

This performance is sponsored by Compassion and Choices, Bloomington-Normal Chapter; Death with Dignity Group at UUCUC; and Final Options Illinois. It is facilitated by Compassion and Choices, Bloomington-Normal Chapter.

Please let Karen Retzer (karenfooteretzer@yahoo.com) know by March 15 if childcare is needed.
Partner for People and Place

Across the globe, there are places of persistent extreme poverty that lie at the intersection of particular landscapes and populations.

Rural Haiti is such a place - where people are bound in poverty to a landscape that is stressed by the highest population density in the Western Hemisphere. It is an endemic humanitarian and environmental crisis.

But when people in poverty can tap into their talents and wisely use the land they live on, they can shape their lives for a better tomorrow. Helping rural Haitians make this journey is what Partner for People and Place does. Its purpose is to reduce rural poverty in Haiti through sustainable economic development.

SO WHAT CAN BE DONE ?

This is the question that led Partner For People & Place to put down roots in Haiti. There, we are JP (Jatrofa Projenou) and we work with communities and families to develop solutions to the poverty they face - not Band-Aid solutions, but lasting ones that are based on economics, ecology, and practicality. And with over 10 years on the job, we know what works:

**HEAL THE LAND**: Restore the land capacity to support
**GROW LOCAL ENTERPRISE**: Produce goods & services
**TEACH LIVELIHOOD SKILLS**: Skills to make a living
**WORK WITH PEOPLE AS PARTNERS**: Putting hearts & hands together.

[www.peopleandplace.org](http://www.peopleandplace.org)
Why Pledge?
By Kathleen Holden, Member
Stewardship Committee

We know the benefits of our loving community here at UUCUC, and we know that our financial support makes it possible. It is because of this support that we are able to pay our excellent staff, keep up our church home and grounds, and make positive changes outside our walls.

We also hear and read the stories members tell about what an important role this place plays in their lives. I believe that each one of us has a similar story; I know I do. But today, my message is about the practical side of giving: pledging, or why it is critical that you tell us in advance how much you plan to give to the church next year. It’s all about planning.

Let’s do some calendar work. Our church operates on a fiscal year: July 1 to June 30. While the budget begins on July 1 each year, the process of developing a preliminary budget, raising the funds and passing a final budget takes months. Here is the process:

Shortly after the new year, our church committees are asked to determine the financial needs that will allow them to further the mission of our church. These requests are reviewed by the Finance Committee and approved by the Board of Trustees. The Stewardship Committee develops and implements a strategy to raise the necessary funds. (You have been hearing a lot from us in the past few weeks.)

We need your pledge by March 4 so that the Finance Committee can build a budget based upon the financial resources that will be available for the next fiscal year. In March, the Committee turns a preliminary budget into a final one for BOT approval in April. That budget is presented to the Meeting of the Congregation for approval in May. By the end of June, if you are as generous as we know you will be, we will be ready for an exciting 2018-2019 fiscal year.

Thank you for making it possible!
BE THE FACE OF SUNDAY MORNING:
JOIN A HOSPITALITY TEAM

Hospitality Teams are in charge of Sunday morning hospitality (e.g. bell ringing, welcoming, ushering, providing decorations and refreshments) for two months during the year. Hospitality Teams are a great way to meet people and serve our congregation in a fun and important way. All members and friends are encouraged to join a Hospitality Team. Each Team has 30-35 members so you do not need to help on every Sunday assigned to your Team. Stop by the Hub table on Sunday mornings to sign up for a Hospitality Team (or to find out if you are already assigned to a Team.)

Questions? Contact Peggy Patten of the Membership Committee.

Thanks Hospitality Team D

Thanks to Anne Sharpe and Karen Folk, Hospitality Team Leaders for the month of February. Thanks to all the Hospitality Team D volunteers who assisted Anne and Karen each Sunday during the month.

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New Hospitality Team E Co-Leader

Welcome to Kathy Robinson, new co leader of Team E. Kathy is taking the place of Jenny Hunt who needs to step down as co-leader to focus on her duties on the Board of Trustees. Thank you for your Hospitality Team service, Jenny. And thank you, Kathy, for your willingness to help.

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Table Hosts Needed for Intergenerational Hospitality Hour Mixer

The Membership Committee is looking for 12 table hosts to assist with our intergenerational hospitality hour mixer scheduled after our service on Sunday, April 29. Duties include facilitating simple conversational activities for the group of 8 – 10 at your table. If you can assist, contact Peggy Patten.

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Hymnals Available in Church Library

One set of the oversized, spiral bound hymnals (grey and the teal covered) is now available to borrow from our church library. The hymnals can be found on the top shelf of the library shelves (located in the library room off of Fellowship Hall) at the far right. Use the self-check system by completing the library loan slips of paper provided on the shelves. If you have borrowed other hymnals, please return them to our sanctuary so we have a sufficient number for congregants to use on Sunday mornings.

Peggy Patten, Membership Committee Chair
mspaggypatten@gmail.com

Sherry Bohlen, Membership Coordinator
membershipcoordinator@uucuc.org
Creating a Positive Worship Experience

Many of those who sit in the back of the sanctuary have expressed a concern about disruptions to the worship service when people come and go during the service. We are trying out a new practice starting in March that we hope will help create a more satisfying worship experience.

Once the worship service has begun our ushers will open the doors for entry into the sanctuary only during transitions in the service (e.g. announcements, greeting your neighbor, hymns, offertory, etc.). Look for the signs posted the sanctuary doors that say: “Service is in progress.

Please wait for an usher to invite you in during the next transition.”

Also beginning in March, Hospitality Team members will use a chime signal 4-5 minutes before the start of the service to notify those in Fellowship Hall and the foyer that the worship service is about to begin.

Thanks for your help. If you have any questions about this change, talk to Membership Coordinator, Sherry Bohlen or to Membership Committee chair, Peggy Patten.

Church Tours Coming

Are there parts of our church building you have never explored or are curious about? Starting in March we will offer short monthly tours after our Sunday service. Watch your eNews for more details.
**CARE CORE COMMITTEE**

**Our Caring Congregation**

Do you or someone you know have Pastoral Care needs? Help is just a phone call or email away! Our Caring Congregation is a network of caring volunteers among our church family who are ready to assist you. Our Caring Congregation is the vehicle by which we share our concerns as well as invite you to deepen your connection to our church family through reaching out, pitching in and stepping up to be there for each other.

Care Core is the coordinating committee which meets monthly to consider pastoral care needs, share concerns, and develop ways for our volunteer network to help our church community. Our volunteers have made meals, provided rides, company, child care, and moving muscle among other services. We have sent cards, made home visits, and hosted memorial services. If there is some way we can assist you please email: carecore@uucuc.org, or call the church office (217) 384-8862 or you can call any member of our steering committee (see the church directory). If you would like to join our network of Caring Congregation volunteers, please also email: carecore@uucuc.org.

Care Core Steering Committee: Phil Abruzzi, Sally Babbitt, Chuck Cooper, Maryly Crutcher, Jennifer Greene, Sandy Hannum, Deedy Marble, Marilyn Ryan, Florence Caplow and Cindy Loui (chair)

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**MARCH BIRTHDAYS!**

Happy birthday wishes to those who celebrate this month.

A list of our Members & Friends birthdays can be found on our website.

(Look for Birthdays under Members & Friends)
A Scent-Free Policy

There is growing concern regarding chemicals which make up scents and fragrances. When exposed to these personal hygiene, cleaning products and/or household items, some people become ill or severely affected. Symptoms range from headaches, nausea, breathing difficulties, eye and skin irritation, fatigue and exacerbation of autoimmune disorders, along with other complications.

The scents are supposedly composed of flowers and herbs but are actually a concoction of 95-100% chemicals, mostly petrochemicals. They do not have to be itemized on the ingredients list. Independent analysis of various fragrances have revealed a troubling array of chemicals which are known as dangerous as well as many which are untested. Consumer health and environmental groups have been targeting the industry as the reports of their detrimental effects continue to rise.

To safely accommodate those affected many medical facilities, businesses and churches are adopting fragrance free policies. Our values drive us to respect the inherent worth and dignity of every person and treat them with compassion. To enhance and widen our welcome we should educate ourselves regarding this affliction and establish our church as a safe zone for people to attend.

The UUA has developed a sample policy, which we could adopt here at UUCUC. Please review it.

To create a more comfortable environment, we ask you to:

- use non-scented body products (e.g. lotion, hair-spray)
- refrain from using perfume, cologne, and other fragrances
- allow recently dry-cleaned clothing to air before wearing
- use non-scented laundry products on clothing worn to this gathering

To create a more comfortable environment, the organizers are:

- using non-scented soap in the restrooms
- using least toxic cleaning products, disinfectants
- removing or disconnecting fragrance-emitting devices from restrooms
- not scheduling pesticide application or carpet shampooing prior to this meeting
- using non-scented or beeswax candles in our chalices and rituals

Contact Accessibility Task Force, Wendy Graves (wgraves7@msn.com) or Bill Childers (wchilder@comcast.net) with comments.
UPCOMING RE DATES TO REMEMBER

March 2018

4  Regular RE Classes. Pen Pal Reveal Lunch after church
11  Regular RE Classes. CCS
18  Spring Break - No RE Classes. Special craft class.
25  Spring Break - No RE Classes. Children & Youth attend Worship

April 2018

1  Regular RE Classes; Easter Egg Hunt
8  Regular RE Classes. CCS
15  Regular RE Classes
22  Regular RE Classes
29  Regular RE Classes

CCS - Children’s Choir Singing
On CCS Sundays, children and youth begin in Worship Service.

Note: Check eNews and Order of Service for any changes to the calendar.

Goodbye for Now, from our former DRE, Dr. Cindy Wakeland

“How lucky I am to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard.” (Winnie the Pooh)

I have forever-fond memories of the friendly community of UUCUC. I am thankful to the committee who brought me in as an interim and kept me on as a full time Director of Religious Education.

I have something to remember with the children as I think of their knee hugs, their pictures, the pageants, the fun we had together at summer camp, the learning they discovered during religious education classes, and the creations they made at the Chef-A-Thon. The friendships and happiness made through the pen pal program will forever stay in my mind.

I have something to take with me from the learning I received from you and in the Renaissance Modules with other UU educators. Thank you for your financial support for these opportunities.

The parents and volunteers of this church are amazing and full of ideas. You have been so gracious in helping with programs and activities. I have something special in my heart for the teachers, who have given of their time, creativity, patience, and love of the children and youth.

I have something to take with me from my fellow staff members. They shared computer skills, writing skills, communication skills, and how to care for one another.

Saying goodbye is hard, but it is not the end. Many of you have asked if I will stay in touch. I will, since you all have touched my heart in many ways. How lucky I am to have known you all. May our futures be bright as we move ahead.

New staff member to support RE this spring!

Jody Hangar, parent and teacher, has stepped up to support the teachers and the program this spring, until our new Interim DRE is hired (the search for the Interim began this week). Jody will be available by email at re-director@uucuc.org, and will be working on Fridays and on Sunday mornings. We are so grateful for her willingness to work with us.
Dates to note on your calendar! For the most up-to-date calendar, please visit our calendar page on our website. You can also check out our events page.

March 11, 2:30 pm  Racial Justice Initiative Film Screening, “White Like Me”
March 13, 6:45 pm  Board of Trustees Presents: Webinar “And Each Day We Mean One More”
March 18        Book & Magazine Exchange Sunday
March 25, 2:00 pm  UUCUC Death with Dignity Plays