



The Chicago Area UU Council (CAUUC) Fall Conference will be held on Saturday, November 13th 9:30am-NOON and be conducted via Zoom video conference. There is NO FEE required to participate though donations are welcome and appreciated to help defer the costs of the conference and support the ongoing work of CAUUC.

About the conference topic:

There's a strong desire among most of us to reconnect in-person with our church communities, especially if we haven't been able to thus far. Elders and families with young children, in particular, have been isolated throughout the pandemic.

We've experienced loss of family members, friends, community--and loss of whatever each of us considered our old normal. For many among us, we are filled with emotions and grieving due to the ongoing pandemic and the fleeting glimpses of what a new normal might look like.

	<p>Keynote Presenter: Elizabeth Harding Affiliated Community Minister, Second Unitarian Church of Chicago</p> <p>Elizabeth will offer a framework for understanding the first year of grief and some reflections on collective grief during this pandemic time. The presentation will highlight coping strategies, including ritual.</p>
<p>Panelists:</p>	<p>Elizabeth Harding Affiliated Community Minister Second Unitarian</p> <p>Dr. Mary Lamb Sheldon Director of Lifespan Religious Exploration Countryside Church UU</p> <p>Suzanne Williams Communications Consultant Member of Unitarian Church of Hinsdale</p> <p>Leah Mikkelsen Board President Tree of Life Congregation</p> <p>Shelby Daniel-Wayman Epidemiologist Member of Unitarian Church of Hinsdale</p> <p>Our panel will discuss the challenges faced in gathering our UU communities, creative solutions we've found, and opportunities discovered along the way.</p>

As a society, we've often yielded to the choices of the loudest voices. However, our UU principles compel us to also listen to and consider the quieter voices and even those without a voice.

Congregations that have resumed in-person gatherings have those among them that are concerned about serious health risks. They are more likely to be limited in their participation due to lack of options, means, or "Zoom fatigue".

Congregations that have not resumed in-person gatherings have congregants among them that are pushing to resume gathering in-person for church worship and social activities--straining some relationships and putting pressure on church leaders and staff.

Complicating plans is the very real diversity of opinion among UUs about their personal safety and the risk factors associated with: 1) getting Covid-19 vaccinations, 2) being around unvaccinated people or people with unknown vaccination status, and 3) masking and unmasking protocols.

The pandemic, and our response to it, continues to challenge us with new problems while also providing us with opportunities to develop creative solutions and practice being in right relationship with each other as we navigate our way.

Let's join together to explore how we can use this opportunity to strengthen our congregational communities while working through the challenges associated with gathering and building our UU communities during the ongoing pandemic.

Register at <https://uuchicagoarea.org/conference>

