



2016 UU Women's Connection Council

Tracy Zieber-Minks, Chair
tracyzieber@gmail.com

Diana DeWeese, Vice Chair
kidi71@aol.com

Patricia Hyams, Secretary
patriciahyams@att.net

Janet Adams, Treasurer
jadams5357@att.net

Juli Cicarelli, At Large
cicjimjuli@gmail.com

C. Sage Hagy, At Large
csageh@comcast.net

Karin Janowski, At Large
karin_janowski@yahoo.com

Buffy Lael-Wolf, At Large
moonsgirl292@hotmail.com

YOUR NAME HERE!
Recruiting for Councilors
starting in 2017 — let us
know if you want to help
with the work of connecting
women across the Mid-
America Region!

Voices of Women

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Fall 2016

~ Fall Retreat brochure inside this VOW ~

Together Again - Pilgrim Park June 3-5, 2016

Twice a year I look forward to getting together with a very special group of women—in the spring at Pilgrim Park and in the fall at DeKoven Center. Our last gathering was a beautiful spring weekend where we spent time in groups and sometimes by ourselves. I love looking around and seeing familiar faces and new faces. During dinner on Friday we met two UU women who had driven from Nebraska that day to join us for the weekend. I like knowing that I have a whole weekend to spend with them and get to know them better.



We had a wonderful in-gathering ritual outside. Pat Hyams, a new member of the Council from North Shore Unitarian Church, planned our celebration around the element of Air. It has been said before that we have a very musical group of women and this was proved again. Pat had written lyrics we sang to the tune of “Amazing Grace” to call the directions, which was amazing! Under the trees with the leaves just beginning their season was a wonderful way to start our weekend.



The next morning after breakfast we all gathered together to hear our keynote speaker. Christine

Organ is a member of Countryside Church UU who came to speak to us about our stories. She has written a book— *Open Boxes: the Gifts of Living a Full and Connected Life* - and is a regular columnist for Scary Mommy online - www.scarymommy.com. Christine shared with us her spiritual journey and how she became a UU. We then shared stories of our own religious and spiritual journeys. As always when you get us talking we can go on for quite awhile.

After lunch we had the opportunity to choose from four workshops. The two earlier ones were *Writing as a Spiritual Practice* lead by our keynote Christine Organ and a *Sacred Movement* workshop led by Juli Cicarelli. Juli, Gretchen Ohmann and the women

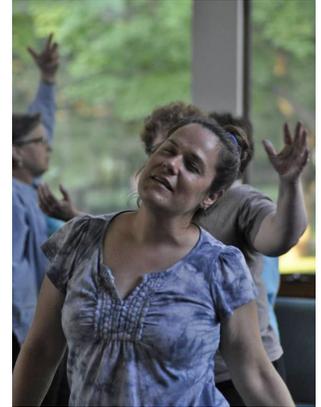


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from Countryside Church UU choreographed simple flowing movements to some of our favorite UU hymns. The group shared their creation during Open Mic Saturday evening. During the second session there were two more workshops. Jenny Ross led a workshop on *Creating Prayer Flags*. We designed and decorated our own peace flags – one to keep and one to give to the UU Women’s Council. Those flags were used to decorate the Red Tent at General Assembly in Columbus, Ohio this



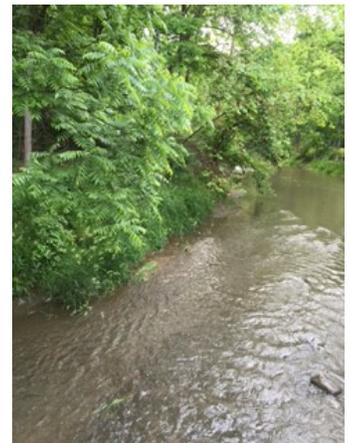
past June. Heather McMeekan’s workshop taught us how to use *Air* (our honored element for the Spring Conference) for *Healing, Play, & Social Justice*. We flew kites!

My favorite part of this weekend was the two early morning walks I took up a hill on the property. Saturday I went by myself and was amazed by how high I walked up that very steep hill! Sunday I went with Jenny Ross and ended with walking the labyrinth that is on park property.



Sunday after breakfast we opened the circle and said good-bye, knowing we would see each other in the fall. Hope to see you there where we will have new experiences and make new friends!

— Sage Hagy



Open Mic

It’s been a long tradition that we hold Open Mic at our Connection gatherings, and welcome all comers. I'm not sure if we are the most talented bunch, but we are the most appreciative audience you will ever meet. We offer you the opportunity to sing a song, play an instrument, read a poem, honor someone who has enriched your life, talk to us about why and what you are doing, be serious or silly. So start thinking now about what you'd like to share this October at the Fall Retreat. I promise you we will listen and applaud your efforts.

—Juli Cicarelli



Women as Voices of Wisdom and Compassion

Embodied Spirit and the Rise of the Wounded Feminine



Keynote: Dr. Kayta (Kathleen) Curzie Gajdos,
author of *Quiet Wisdom in Loud Times: The Rise of the Wounded Feminine*.

Spirit – chi – breath to body – embodied spirit or spirited bodies? What is the relation of our matter to our minds and spirits? How do we honor the wounded feminine principle? What wisdom does it provide for us in our journey to the wholeness that welcomes the wedding of body and spirit?

In the fall of 2015, Kayta took a trip with Carol Christ, to Crete, where she visited many ancient Minoan goddess sites on mountaintops and in deep caves, and reclaimed them for the goddess through song and ritual. She met Karin Janowski and Pat Hyams, also on the trip. Karin and Kayta are intrepid hikers. Kayta and Pat formed "the choir" on the trip and taught chants to the other participants. The trip to Crete is an indelible memory for all of them.

Kayta is a psychologist who works with individuals, couples, and families. She has experience and training in the fields of alcohol and drug addictions, hypnosis, family therapy, Jungian theory, meditation and mindfulness, grief and trauma, EMDR, ETT, sandplay therapy, and dreamwork. Dr. Gajdos developed a practice in the Pittsburgh area, where she also wrote for the Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic's Family Therapy Newsletter.

Dr. Gajdos has published in the American Psychological Association Bulletin, The Family Psychologist, and in the Swedenborgian publications, Chrysalis and The Messenger. *Illness, Crisis and Loss* has published her articles on intergenerational grief as well as on the compassion of Käthe Kollwitz and Mr. Rogers. She has taught at the graduate level at West Chester University and Wilmington University, and has supervised psychologists in training.

Dr. Gajdos holds Master's degrees in both philosophy and clinical psychology and received her Ph.D. in counseling at the University of Pittsburgh. Among her professional affiliations, she includes having been a founding member and board member of the C.G. Jung Educational Center of Pittsburgh, as well as being listed in *Who's Who of American Women*. Woven into her professional career are Dr. Gajdos' pursuits of dancing, singing, and writing poetry. Her website address is: www.drgajdos.com

Fall Retreat Workshops

Kindness as a Spiritual Path – Tracy Zieber-Minks

What is the difference between being nice and being kind? Do you consider yourself a nice and a kind person? To whom are you nice? To whom are you kind? And who is deserving of your kindness? The idea of kindness as a spiritual path is not a new one, but in today's modern, technical age, it's one that many people may not devote as much thought to as they should. I invite you to join us as we practice "The Pause" -- the process of taking a moment to step back and consider our words and actions within any given moment, and how they affect those around us.

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Living the Moon Cycle – Sue Wilhelm

We will discover the three sisters of the moon in our days, months, years, and lives. You will be given an opportunity to share your own experience and intuition throughout the workshop. We will also explore the knowledge of science and use it to understand how our physical and emotional needs change throughout our lives, filled with cycles and seasons.

Altered Books – Sage Hagy

Sometimes we want to change the stories of our lives. One way to do this is through "Altered Books". An *altered book* is a form of mixed media artwork that changes a book from its original form into a different form, *altering* its appearance and/or meaning. Sage will show examples of books that have been altered and everyone will try their hand at changing at least a page or two. Feel free to bring a commercially printed book you would like to work on, or you could also use a blank book you use or plan to use as a journal. Also bring any crafting materials you think would be good for yourself or the group. Sage will also provide materials and of course she will have plenty of Mod-Podge on hand.



Embodied spirit or spirited bodies?

Continue the journey with Kayta, as we explore the questions and seek the answers of body and spirit connection. Find the wounded feminine within yourself and discuss how we begin healing ourselves and our broken world.

UU Women's Connection – Telling our Story

The UU MidAmerica Region Annual Meeting was in St. Paul this past April and The Connection had a booth. Thanks to Gretchen O., our booth was right next to the UUWR and UUWF booth – in the main corridor. Thank you Gretchen!!! We talked to many women about The Connection, our events, programming that we provide, our lending library - and we gave away lots of brochures and CHOCOLATE! Dozens of women joined our mailing list!



In June, we collaborated with Gretchen O. – that's G.O. – a

perfect description for Gretchen!! We decided to do a Red Tent at General Assembly in Columbus, OH. Gretchen brought the tent and gifts for each visitor to the tent and The Council brought the Red Fabric, Red Pillows, Red lights, Red Dancing Lady, coloring pages and pencils AND our newly women-created prayer flags. It was MARVELOUS! Women came, women rested, women colored and women took away gifts to remember us. Women working together to create a safe and welcoming place for other women! That's what we do!



Please REGISTER ONLINE on our website, www.uuwomensconnection.org
or mail completed registration form with payment to:

Janet Adams, 1310 Clement Street, Joliet, IL 60435

Make checks payable to: **UU Women's Connection**

Questions?? - Call Janet – 815-727-1948 or email – registrar@uuwomensconnection.org

Workshop Choices — Please indicate your **first** choice for a workshop on Saturday.

You will have an opportunity to sign up for a second workshop when you check-in on Friday or Saturday.

- _____ Embodied spirit or spirited bodies? (Keynote's workshop)
- _____ Kindness as a Spiritual Path
- _____ Altered Books
- _____ Living the Moon Cycle

There will be an Open Mic on Saturday evening. Please indicate if you will be participating.

Yes, I will be participating.

OTHER NEEDS/REQUESTS (We will do our best to accommodate.)

Dietary concerns/restrictions Please list _____

Vegetarian meals preferred Indicate type of vegetarian _____

Other Please list _____

ROOM/BOARD INFORMATION

- Rates listed are per person for the entire conference period, Friday evening through Sunday morning.
- Meals included are Friday dinner (6:30 -7:30 p.m.) through Sunday's Pack-and-Go lunch.
- Check-in time is 4 p.m. Friday. Room checkout time is 10 a.m. Sunday.
- Sheets, pillow, blanket, towel and washcloth are provided. If you want an extra pillow, bring your own.
- *There are a limited number of rooms at DeKoven, so send in your reservations early!*

SCHOLARSHIP/GRANT APPLICATION

The UU Women's Connection budgets funds for grants of *up to* \$100 each.

Additional \$40 grants are available to help with childcare expense. *Note: On-site childcare is not available, though nursing babies are welcome.*

Applications must be postmarked by September 30. These go fast!

You'll get an answer to your request within 10 days.

My need is _____

My home church/group will provide _____

An additional scholarship is allocated for ministerial students. Please list school name and degree sought.

Membership Dues

We've created three levels of support for the Unitarian Universalist Women's Connection. *Select the level that is right for you!*

\$15 Supporter

The UU Women's Connection's programs helps you grow spiritually.

\$25 Sustainer

You are also committed to sustaining the work of the UU Women's Connection.

\$50 Visionary

You are also committed to both the present and future growth of the UU Women's Connection.

Units of 10 register for \$130 in 2016. Register a unit of 10 members for \$13 each!

A Reminiscence

Our bylaws state that women who serve on our Council can only serve for two consecutive three-year terms. At the end of the year, I will be going off the Council after serving six years. I can only say that I will miss being part of such an inspiring, dedicated, capable, compassionate, and generous-hearted group of women. The Council is responsible for planning our retreats, picking our key-



noters, selecting our retreat sites, planning the workshops, putting out the VOW, taking the feedback from attendees' evaluations to change and improve our Spring Conference and Fall Retreat. We meet four times a year, either by conference call, or by visiting UU churches. We meet with the women of the congregation and offer programming such as a Margaret Fuller Conversation or a "Cupcake – a session

from Cakes for the Queen of Heaven".

Believe me when I say it's all been a labor of love. I urge any woman who has enjoyed our retreats to step up and join with that remarkable group of women. You will be enriched by the experience.



I want to add that over the past six years I have seen the value of our scholarship program. I have seen women who needed support find it, and I have met women who just needed a break from hectic lives. Some have gone on to be a valuable part of our Women's Connection. So when you register, consider your sisters who may need emotional support and or just time away from troubles. Give to our scholarship fund: like our UU Women's Connection councilors, be generous and open-hearted. By giving to our scholarship fund you will be helping less financially secure women, and at the same time expanding the work of the Women's Connection.



Again goodbye and farewell to all the fabulous women who have served with me on the Council.

I'll be seeing you!

— Juli Cicarelli



UU Women's Connection
 1310 Clement Street
 Joliet, IL 60435

www.uuwomensconnection.org

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Support the work of the UU Women's Connection by becoming a member of The Connection or by renewing your membership.

You can do this online at www.uuwomensconnection.org/resources/membership

*or you can mail a check to the Connection Treasurer, **Janet Adams, 1310 Clement Street, Joliet, IL, 60435***

Units of 10 register for \$130 in 2016. Register a unit of 10 members for \$13 each! Individual memberships are \$15.

Membership/Mailing List

Have you moved? Let us know so you won't miss a thing.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

E-MAIL: _____

CHURCH/
 ORGANIZATION _____

 **2016-2017 "Get Connected" Calendar**

October 14-16, 2016.....Fall Retreat,
 DeKoven Center,
 Racine, WI

November 12, 20164th Quarter Meeting
 & Council Annual Meeting,
 Joliet, IL

June 2 – 4, 2017.....Spring Conference,
 Pilgrim Park,
 Princeton, IL