



## 2017 UU Women's Connection Council

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**YOUR NAME HERE!**  
Recruiting for Councilors  
starting in 2018 — 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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Winter 2017

## Save the Date! June 2-4 Spring Conference in Pilgrim Park

The Theme will be *As Above, So Below*.

Our Presenter will be **Molly Remer!**

Molly has been “gathering the women” to circle, sing, celebrate, and share since 2008. She plans and facilitates women’s circles, seasonal retreats and rituals, mother-daughter circles, family ceremonies, and red tent circles in central Missouri. She is an ordained priestess who holds MSW, M.Div, and D.Min degrees. She has worked with groups of women since 1996 and teaches college courses in group dynamics and human services. She began creating birth art during her first pregnancy in 2003 and has never stopped, though the medium in which she works has evolved with time, as well as its expression. Molly is fiery, intense, and driven. Molly is the author of *Womanrunes*, *Earthprayer*, and *The Red Tent Resource Kit*, as well as three social service oriented booklets and a miscarriage memoir. She maintained her popular *Talk Birth* blog from 2007-2016 and writes about theology, nature, practical priestessing, and the goddess at [Brigid's Grove](http://www.brigidsgrove.com), her [Woodspriestess](http://www.brigidsgrove.com) blog, and *SageWoman Magazine*. She also writes for [Feminism and Religion](http://www.brigidsgrove.com). Read more about Molly at [www.brigidsgrove.com](http://www.brigidsgrove.com).



## Making Memories at the Fall Retreat

by Sage Hagy

This year I drove up to Racine alone. As I pulled into the drive I felt tensions, anxieties, and outside worries melt away. Soon I was greeting old friends and setting up this year’s raffle. All events this year were held in the main meeting place, it makes it a more intimate event with everyone being in the same place all weekend.



Dinner Friday is the first time we all get together and say hello. As always the food at the DeKoven Center was very tasty, especially the dessert.

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After dinner we all gathered together to call the directions. This fall the guiding element was Spirit. We were lead in this by Pat Hyams. We had brought items to put on the altar to represent our own spirit.

Almost everyone brought items to put in this year's raffle and I had fun setting up the tables and selling raffle tickets. A special thank you to Pat for donating the drum.

Friday night Tori asked if I would like to get up to see the sunrise. "Yes," I said, "I even have a winter coat this year." "And socks," said

Tori. Yes I did have socks, but this is one of the reasons I love coming to these conferences, we have such history with each other.

So off to bed early to get up the next morning before dawn and go down to the beach with Tori, Sue, Nicole, and Pat. We watched a beautiful sunrise and the young ones helped the older ones get on and off the rocks at the beach's edge.

This year's keynote was Kayte, a wonderful woman that Karin and Pat had met last year on their trip to Crete. Kayte spoke to us about finding the feminine goddess in all of us. Looking back and with everything that has happened, I remember her telling us to honor the goddess of humor and laughter in all of us.

In the afternoon there were four workshops offered in two time slots. I ran a workshop on "Altered Books", an art medium I myself am exploring at this time. Kayte lead another workshop. In the second time slot Tracy lead a workshop on Kindness. Sue ran a workshop on "The Phases of the Moon". I took an independent workshop called "Nap".

In the evening after dinner we held the raffle. Where one of those *do you remember when* incidents happened. I pulled the raffle ticket for a very nice purse Diana won. "Do you know who donated the purse?" I asked. "No," she said. "Marissa," I said. "It's okay Mom you didn't give it to me," said Marissa. We go a few items to a hairclip, and I say to Marissa, "Are you going to win this?" and we can tell by the look on her face yes she had put tickets into the bag for an item her mother has donated, and yes, she did win it. From Springfield to Racine so they can exchange items and give the Women Connection's coffers money.

After the raffle we had an open mic, where many women sang, read poetry, played didgeridoo, and other talents were shown off. The evening, of course, was far from over: drumming, game playing, coloring and other activities took place into late night and early morning.

Heather P. lead early risers in a Gong Mediation, as Janet on Saturday morning had lead a group in Yoga.

After breakfast we opened the circle and did our final drumming, Heather M. playing the drum she had happily won in the raffle.

I mention meal time because this is where I find I have the most interesting conversations with women I know and women that are joining us for the first time. This year I had a very interesting conversation with Karin about her childhood in Germany right after World War II. I also learned about Mena who has just moved to Wisconsin but has been involved with other UU women's group; Starhawk once stayed at her house!

As always DeKoven provided bag lunches to get us on our way back to our various homes. Since we had nice day some of us gathered at a picnic table to enjoy our lunch before driving off.

**Please join us in the Spring with our keynote Molly Remer and in the Fall when the keynote will be Kellianna.**



## Morning Meditation with the Gong

by Heather Poyner

For the last several years, I have participated in the annual UU Women's Connection Fall Retreat, often leading workshops related to hand drums and interactive percussion. This year as I eagerly anticipated the retreat at DeKoven Center, I felt drawn to offering a meditation session using gongs.

Rewind: I first heard a large (28-inch) symphonic gong played during relaxation after kundalini yoga four years ago. That first time, as I lay on my back with my eyes closed, I felt the waves of sound striking my palms and the bottoms of my feet. Surely, I thought, the instructor Janice had somehow lifted the large disk and was moving it closer to us as she struck it. When she was finished, I learned that this was not the case. Those waves had found their way to my body without any outside help at all. And although it had been only 7 or 8 minutes, the effect of the sound was like that of a 60-minute full body massage.

A few classes later I thought, "I need a gong in my life. I also need to find ways to share this experience with others."

Mesmerized by the haunting harmonics of this amazing instrument, I learned about them (and their considerable cost), purchasing a 26-inch Paiste (brand name) gong from an amazing gong and drum store in Memphis, Tenn.

I didn't know exactly what I would do with it, but I did know that those large-wave vibrations were "good medicine" that needed sharing. About a year later, I felt it needed "a companion" and found a 22-inch Chinese wind gong (flatter, higher pitched) at my local music store. And because of the impact I knew they would have on my rhythmic path, I named them: "Memphis Guru Chi" and "Peng jou," the Chinese word for "friend."

In the past three years I have sought out diverse environments in which to share the songs of my gongs. Among these have been playing gong after weekly yoga classes, for listeners receiving acupuncture treatments, and once as part of a live Halloween radio show on Milwaukee's south side. Most recently, I have begun playing Memphis Guru Chi at the Hospice House in Kenosha for souls in their last days and their families.

Fast forward: During the planning of this year's UU Women's Connection retreat, I suggested a gong meditation to Diana who responded enthusiastically. We decided that Sunday morning would be best. In hindsight, this was a good time to offer the meditation because during the weekend I could consider how the voices of the gongs might best complement themes brought up during workshops and conversations that took place before Sunday at 7:30 a.m. As hoped, by the time I went to bed Saturday night, I knew how I wanted to preface our gong meditation session.

When the ten or so women came into St. Mary's chapel, I suggested they make themselves comfortable in a chair or lying on their yoga mats.

I began by telling the women that it was not hard to find the intersection of the resonances of gong song and the weekend's themes: "strength and gentleness" and "the Divine Feminine." I noted that as women we are the embodiment of strength and gentleness: the physical strength we need to carry on tasks of reproduction which must be tempered by gentleness of nurturing children and those in our intimate circle. This, we know, is the charge of the Divine Feminine.

So goes the gong: although an inanimate object, it is forged in strength (huge sheets of brass and nickel, bathed in fire and pounded to perfect pitch) and then its songs are gently coaxed from its surface in sound vibrations that have the power to transport those who hear it to dimensions beyond ordinary time and space.

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After introducing the session with these words and concepts, I invited participants to try a kundalini-inspired mudra; the position and movement of the hands used to commit ourselves to strength and gentleness (a tribute to the Hindu god Ganesha.)

With that, I let the gongs continue the conversation, at one point walking with the smaller gong around the room to visit each person.

I cannot speak to the experience of others, but it is my hope that the sounds helped each of the women to facilitate their own songs of strength, gentleness and The Divine Feminine.

Namaste,  
Heather

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## Encouraging Safe Spaces for Women's Voices on Social Media

*by Heather McMeekan*

Social media holds tremendous power to shape cultural norms (for good or ill) and to provide education, information, and support to people all over the world. Social media apps entice us to engage, entertain, and connect with other users with shared interests, life experiences, and ideologies. That we are able to instantly find like-minded people regardless of geographical location is still very new in the human experience. The opportunity to have social connection can be a life-changing, quality-of-life enhancing experience for those isolated by geography, trauma, or circumstances. But it's not all rainbows and butterflies.

Most of us have heard of or directly experienced the dark side of social media, generally in the form of "trolls." According to Lifehacker, trolls are "anonymous users with nothing to say but rude, off-topic, or annoying comments designed to make you angry." Source: <http://lifehacker.com/5854053/how-to-stop-caring-about-trolls-and-get-on-with-your-life>

Trolling can take the form of bullying, racism, homophobia, sexism, xenophobia, gas-lighting, or personalized targeting of those who dare to express an opinion online, especially women and minorities. Those who do speak up against such troll posts or comments soon find themselves being trolled, putting them on the defensive, and making them afraid to speak up in the future.

When we're the ones being targeted, it feels very personal and emotionally painful. If we have any previous traumas, we can experience triggering. It can feel very lonely to be on the receiving end of negative comments. When this happens, it's good to keep in mind that those who love us will still love us, and those who would judge us based on a troll's comment aren't worth our emotional energy.

For those who are willing to speak up online, here are some guidelines to keep trolls out of our emotional lives while dealing with them.

**Accept that speaking up won't be comfortable.** For far too long, we've allowed structural injustice to remain hidden by silencing our responses out of fear of conflict or relational aggression because we've been culturally conditioned to accept the idea that speaking about politics or religion isn't polite. Challenge that belief. We can be polite when speaking up, but silence is never polite when human beings are in harms way.

**Refuse to be baited.** By refusing to be defensive and instead addressing the inappropriateness of a troll post, a succinct but pointed response keeps the original topic on-message. This denies the troll the satisfaction of knowing they provoked a negative emotion in us. The goal is never to change the "Troll." No

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matter what they say, never take it personally or you become a bigger target. One need only look to President-elect Trump's Twitter to see the behavior of someone who is easily baited. Don't be like Trump.

**Don't Feed The Trolls!** Also known as "DFTT," any attention given to trolls at all feeds them. We do not owe anyone our time, attention, or support on social media. If someone trolls a comment we've made, we do not have to respond to it. Often, just the act of ignoring a troll is enough to extinguish the behavior as they go elsewhere looking for an easier target. If they do persist, then we can address their comment with some of the very same responses we learned to employ against bullies while growing up.

**Stick together.** Several outspoken friends have taught me it is crucial to have allies if we are going to use our voice, because our culture does not celebrate outspoken women and minorities. There are those who want us to be silent because it benefits them in some way, even if only to feel superior or feel like they got a "win."

When trolls begin posting off-topic or inflammatory posts on sites, and ignoring them hasn't worked, we alert each other and jump in to attack the offensive posts, but not the person posting it. If the negative comments are from friends, co-workers, or family members, allowing friends and allies to defend us gives us space from the conflict. This allows us to maintain the relationship enough to keep the flow of communication open while not being perceived as backing down.

**The goal of expressing ourselves online is to empower others to speak up.** Our focus should never be to convert those who choose to act hatefully. By powerful example, we can encourage those with empathy, wisdom, and knowledge to find their voice and feel safe using it. We have a voice and a place to use it to amplify our values. When we choose silence for whatever reason, we give that voice away. A simple comment such as "I find your comment to be cruel (or racist, sexist, degrading to women, etc.)" is powerful because it so rarely occurs in response to hateful posts.

**Beware of "Concern Trolling."** Concern trolling occurs when someone offers "helpful suggestions" (criticism) about the manner in which someone posts their feelings about an issue or event. Often this takes the form of minimization of one's feelings, ad hominem attacks. It is perfectly valid to share feelings with whatever language accurately describes them on our own social media accounts.

**Never let a woman stand alone.** A simple comment such as "I'm so sorry you are receiving such hateful comments on this post" goes a long way to elevating the responses. Sometimes, it shuts down negative comments, which is great but not the goal. The goal is to never let a woman stand alone online.

We must find the courage to not allow bullies to silence our voices on our own accounts, or we cede the internet playground to the bullies. The use of social media to harass, stalk, and silence people from using their voice is insidious and must be challenged when possible. As Unitarian Universalists, our second principle calls us to enable justice, equity and compassion in human relations, and this includes online communications. Inequity and injustice thrive when women or minorities are silenced, whether online or in real life.

Our silence or self-censorship in negative responses to our wall posts (or that of our friends/family) may cause others to believe they are alone in our shared feelings. Worse, they may think that most agree with whatever negative, inaccurate, or deliberately unkind sentiments are expressed. Speaking up shows others we are an ally against the rise of hate and cruelty. Those concerned with a healthy, open society need visible allies more than ever. There is no better time to reveal our true selves than now, while we still can.

*Heather McMeekan, MS, is an activist, advocate, artist, and social media evangelist. She trains people, businesses, & non-profit organizations how to create, design, and manage social media accounts online. She is a webmaster at Western Illinois University.*

## Meet our new councilwomen:



### Heather McMeekan

Heather McMeekan is an artist, activist, kite enthusiast, and proud Mom to two teens and one dog. With a passion for education, politics, human rights, labor, and healthcare access for all, she advocates and trains advocates in the use of social media for social good. Heather is the founder of the Macomb Kite Festival and the Macomb Community Drum Circle, the Macomb "Liberal Lunchers" Brown Bag lunch, as well as several other community & social media organizations and groups. She is a former paramedic, emergency room technician, and EMS Instructor. Her graphic design work and writing has been viewed by millions of people around the world. She holds a master's degree in Health - Community

Health and works as a webmaster at Western Illinois University. Heather is a member of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Macomb, Illinois.

### Debbie Czarnopys-White

I live in Southern Illinois and can't imagine living anywhere else. Wildlife and nature surround us and have been a blessing. I continue to volunteer as a master naturalist and master gardener. Learning about the many things I still don't know about has become a real fascination to me. Volunteering at a no-kill shelter now and previously walking dogs at an animal control shelter to help socialize them have been teaching tools for me as well. All creatures need affection and what I give them, they more than return to me. I look forward to returning to the Council and look forward to sharing with you and learning from you all.



### Jenny Berman Ross

I live in Mundelein, Illinois, in the far north suburbs of Chicago with one or two dogs and a cat. My children, Matthew (24) and Perry (21) are still in college but come home to visit regularly. I have been a member of North Shore Unitarian Church (NSUC) in Deerfield, IL, since 1996. Before that I was a member of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of the Peninsula in Newport News, VA, for several years. At NSUC, I have taught RE, been a part of the RE Committee, and been the Special Programs Chair. Over the years, I have organized many events that brought people together in community including the annual Seder, the annual picnic, the Women's Affirmation Breakfast, the Secret Pal program, and a Women's Book Group. For many

years I ran the bookstore and assisted with coffee hour. At the present time, I assist the Treasurer as a deposit counter, am a back-up usher, and assist on the caring committee. I believe that it is the personal connections that keep people in the Church and that those connections are fostered through programs and activities that get people together in social or supportive settings.

I am an engineer with the Federal Aviation Administration and work on projects throughout the country. This year I started a small business selling hand-dyed silk scarves, hand-made jewelry and accessories under the name What Jenny Makes. I am active in my community. I am a member of the Fremont Public Library Board of Trustees, and am the volunteer leader of the Library Cookbook Club. I volunteer as an English as a Second Language Tutor, currently leading a discussion group with two women from Korea and one from Japan. I have worked with low level ESL and literacy classes as well. My hobbies include cooking, reading, needlework and fiber art, photography and researching and documenting my family history. I am the cur-

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rent owner of the oldest on-line book discussion group which allows me to share my love of reading with people around the world. I am active in some local needlework and knitting groups as well as on-line chapters of the American Needlepoint Guild and the Embroiderer's Association of Canada. Recently, I joined the North suburban NeedleArts Guild and participated in the Boutique at the Fine Art of Fiber show at the Chicago Botanic Garden. I am passionate about getting younger people involved in needlework and organized a booth at the Milwaukee Maker Faire this fall.

I have enjoyed being part of the community of women created by the UU Women's Connection and attending the retreats. I am looking forward to supporting the group as a part of the Council.

### *From Juli Ciccarelli—*

We all have songs. We all have stories.  
 We all have good times and times when things go wrong.  
 And that's life, the heartache and the glory  
 The heartbeat of life is in our stories and our song  
 (by Julie Shannon)

When Sage, Pat, Diana, Janet, and I met at Janet's house in Joliet for our quarterly meeting on the weekend after the election it is safe to say we were all saddened by the election of Donald Trump as our nation's president. But our coming together eased some of our sadness.

Over the weekend we gave a cupcake session (a single session from *Cakes for the Queen of Heaven* curriculum), created a women's banner with the women from the Joliet church, and attended church services there on Sunday. Meeting and talking with the Joliet women, and hearing the Joliet church service led by the folksingers "February Sky" were comforting and healing experiences for me.

Janet and her *best cook ever* partner, Joe, also added to our comfort. It is not often women are given such care and home hospitality.

During our weekend I became aware of how important it is that women are given time to talk, to tell one another their stories, to talk about their joys and their concerns. We had time that weekend to talk and to listen, to relax and to tell our stories. Pat and Diana sang to us, one of their songs was "We all have stories".

This election and its criticisms of Hillary Clinton made me aware of how women are judged in our society. She was too shrill, she didn't speak from the heart, she was too weak, she didn't have the stamina, she was too rehearsed, too prepared. In your personal life, in your educational life, in your professional life — have you heard such criticisms? If you raise your hand in school or make suggestions at work, you are too pushy; if you are quiet, you are too meek.

It is vital that women get to know one another, on a deeply personal level, and in a safe and caring environment. We need to be able to learn from one another, to ask one another for advice, to sing and to play together, and to honor our lives and our stories.

We are so fortunate to have our Women's Connection retreats where we can tell our stories and sing our songs in a safe, supportive, and healing environment.



4<sup>th</sup> quarter meeting in Joliet:  
 Saturday gathering with the  
 Joliet Women

## The Value of the Feminine

by Janet Adams

It seems that for many of my friends, this past year has been, at the very least, difficult. My Facebook feed was filled with posts wishing the year over and that it go up in flames for good measure. Two of the major lowlights of the year being the death of what seemed to be an overabundance of celebrities and the presidential election, I'm sure that each individual poster of the burning 2016 had their own personal low points to add. I must confess that, with the exception of the election, my 2016 was not so awful—rather ordinary in fact.

However, that one exception seems to overshadow everything. It truly feels like a dark cloud covering the entire country. And not just any dark cloud, but one of those you see in movies like *Lord of the Rings* when they're showing the bad guy's home—thick, black and gray, oppressive, and constantly churning. I find myself having to consciously stop thinking about who our next president is and what that means. I can hardly bring myself to say or type his name. But as awful as this is, I know that all is not lost. When I step back and calm myself I can feel the hope.

I spend a lot of time on Facebook since my retirement. The vast majority of my Facebook friends being liberal, in the day or two after the election I saw much heartache as I scrolled down the screen. I had to respond and this was my post:

Once you get over the scared, the angry, the hurt, the whatever, once you're able to release the initial shock, fill that space with love and compassion. Love Donald Trump; love those who voted for him; love those you don't want to love. If you say you can't do this, ask yourself first if it's because you don't want to love them. If you don't, that is your choice. If you want the world to be a better place, then in addition to all the other wonderful stuff you're going to do, add loving those who you find difficult to love. Or at the very least, find a way to remove the hate, fear, anger from your heart.

I got many likes and positive comments on this post. This made me feel good, not because people liked my post, but because it told me that others could see the value in love. They understood that love does not equal like and that love is our hope. There were a couple of friends who commented that they could never love Donald Trump. This made me sad. (As a side note, it's interesting to me that both of these friends have chronic/constant health problems. Is there a relationship here? I surely don't know, but it does make me wonder.)

There was also talk of moving out of the country, most of it in jest—one person reminded their friends that most of them couldn't afford to move out of their parents' house, much less move out of the country—but not all. One woman posted on a page called Women With Her that she was seriously considering this option if the Electoral College didn't come through. My heart went out to her and I responded with this:

I know you don't know me, but I just want to say... Breathe. Don't hold on to the hope that Hillary will become president this time. But don't lose hope altogether. I, too, can't fathom the idea of Donald Trump (ew, can't hardly type or say his name) being the president of our United States. But I do believe that because of it, we, especially women, will become stronger. This is our time to show the country and the world that women are not second class citizens; that we are strong; that the feminine traits of nurturing and compassion are more valuable than anyone ever thought.

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Face it, had Hillary been elected most of us would have just sat back and let politics happen. Where is the spiritual growth in that? This new fork in the road (Donald Trump) takes us to a much more difficult path. And I think that this is just what we, especially women, need. Some of you may already be on that path, and perhaps I just speak for myself. But now I have to get up off my lazy ass and go out into the world, even if by way of the internet or maybe just in my community, and do something.

This is our time...the Age of Aquarius, the Sacred Feminine on the rise. We are powerful. We will each express that power in our own unique way. Some of you will be vocal activists; others will quietly pray in your own homes or places of worship. And some of you will just keep on doing what you've been doing and being who you've been being—and that's a good thing. But regardless of what you do or who you are, let us show the world that the feminine is not only powerful, but it has value. And not just intrinsic value. If, for example, we put monetary value on nurturing the planet, then nurturing begins to take on a new importance. And for goddess' sake stop apologizing for whatever feminine traits you express—compassion, empathy, nurturing, sharing, being quiet, to name a few. I find it difficult to watch many kinds of violence on TV or in the movies, in particular historically accurate mistreatment of people by people. Many may think this is a weakness. I make no apologies. This is one of my strengths. I am able to empathize and to see the value of other's lives. This does not make me weak. But the world has yet to see the feminine as valuable. If Hillary was in office we would have left it to her to show the world otherwise. But she does not have all of the feminine traits as her strengths, nor should she. We need to share the workload and this election proves that and is giving us the chance to do just that.

So if you find yourself unable to cope with the state of politics and our government, please...breathe. Quiet your mind, meditate, find your center, and breathe some more. Look for support—we're women, that's what we do. Find and assess your own feminine traits. Use them proudly.

As for the woman who wanted to leave the country, I left her with this:

I will certainly understand if you decide to leave the country. I know someone who is. She needs to do it for her own well-being. If you go, we will know that you are with us in spirit. And you should know that you will be welcomed back at any time.

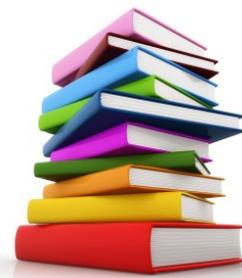
Because we women understand the value in feminine traits, we can let others do their own thing even if we wish they wouldn't. We wish them well and welcome them back, though they never left in spirit anyway. We will do the work that women have always done. But we won't do it silently and we won't do it at all if that is not our calling. And we will raise the awareness that women's work and feminine values are valuable beyond measure.

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## New Books for our UU Women's Connection Lending Library

Donated by Debbie Czarnopys-White. Thank you Debbie!!

- Earth Magic, Steven D. Farmer, 978-1-4019-2005-0
- Advanced Candle Magick, Ray Buckland, 978-1-56718-103-6
- Exploring the Pagan Path, Wisdom from the Elders, 978-1-56414-788-2
- Pagan Spirituality, A Guide to Personal Transformation, Joyce & River Higginbotham, 978-0-7387-0574-3
- True Magick, A Beginner's Guide, Revised & Expanded, Amber K, 978-0-7387-0823-2
- Druid Power, Celtic Faerie Craft & Elemental Magic Amber Wolfe, 978-0-7387-0588-0
- Simply Wicca, Leanna Greenaway, 978-1-4027-4486-0



## UU Women's Connection 2017 Budget

### Category Description

#### INCOME

Dues	\$ 1,250.00
Interest Earned	\$ 20.00
Scholarship Donations	\$ 350.00
IN-Fall Event	\$ 9,050.00
IN-Spring Conference	\$ 4,500.00
Grants Received	\$ 150.00
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$ 15,325.00</b>

#### EXPENSES

##### Admin.

<i>Board Travel</i>	\$ 200.00
<i>Conference Registration Reimbursement</i>	\$ 480.00
<i>Copying</i>	\$ 5.00
<i>Meeting Expense</i>	\$ 150.00
<i>Phone &amp; Communication</i>	\$
<i>Supplies</i>	\$ 50.00
<i>Other Admin.</i>	\$ 500.00
<b>TOTAL Admin.</b>	<b>\$ 1,385.00</b>
Incentive Grants (child care \$40 each)	\$ 160.00
Social Action&Grants	\$ 100.00
Vow, Web, PR	\$ 400.00
Scholarships	\$ 450.00
Out—Fall Retreat	\$ 8,500.00
PayPal Fees	\$ 130.00
Out--Spring Conference	\$ 3,900.00
Emily Meter Scholarship Event	\$ 300.00
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 15,325.00</b>

### A Call for Spring Workshops!

Presenters are sought for  
Spring Conference workshops.

Deadline to submit proposals is  
March 31st. Please contact your  
Council Women (listed on [page 1](#))  
if you have questions or  
would like to submit a proposal.

## 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 2017. Register a unit of 10 members for \$13 each!**

## Finding Your Niche

by Deb Czarnopys-White

I must admit that I came close to having my first panic attack when, after six years on the Council, I was required to take a year off. As usual, life finds a way to fill in the open spots, and I've survived. The Spring Conferences and Fall Retreats have been the emotional foods that sustain me. Whether attending all the activities and workshops or just taking out personal time, just being in the company of these wonderful UU women has been uplifting. I'm not really surprised that at each of these two yearly events, I meet ladies that I have more in common with than I knew and so look forward to deepening those relationships as well as those previously formed. Connecting with the elements has also come to be very meaningful for me. Whether we connect with the element highlighted in the gathering or find another of the Earth, Air, Fire, Water or Spirit elements that calls to us, we are learning to embrace that and flow with the energy. I've been reminded of the importance of having fun amidst the efforts to "save the world" and returning to joys of childhood activities continues to delight me. The intergenerational aspect of our gatherings brings me together with ideas that I hadn't thought of, forgotten, or never had a clue about. The whole experience of belonging to the UU Women's Connection has been like a niche filled that I didn't know was empty. For that, I am eternally grateful.



4<sup>th</sup> quarter meeting in Joliet: Saturday gathering with the Joliet Women

## Our Keynote Presenter for the 2017 Fall Retreat will be Kellianna! Oct 13-15

Kellianna is an American pagan singer and songwriter internationally renowned for her powerful performance of song and chant inspired by myth, magic, sacred places, and ancient times. With guitar and vocals, she brings to life the



stories and sagas of the Gods and Goddesses. With primal frame drumming and soaring vocal chants, she honors the Earth and the Ancestors. Since 2003, she has performed her music in 10 countries on 3 continents, with regular visits to Canada, the United Kingdom, Western Europe, and Australia.



Read more about her at [www.kellianna.com](http://www.kellianna.com).



UU Women's Connection  
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Joliet, IL 60435

[www.uuwomensconnection.org](http://www.uuwomensconnection.org)

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*You can do this online at [www.uuwomensconnection.org/resources/membership](http://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 2017. Register a unit of 10 members for \$13 each! Individual memberships are \$15.**

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 **2017 "Get Connected" Calendar**

February 2, 7pm	First Quarter meeting (conference call)
June 2 – 4,	Spring Conference, Pilgrim Park, Princeton, IL
October 13 – 15	Fall Retreat, DeKoven Center, Racine, WI