Leap of Faith

What makes a person resilient? Google “resilience” and you will see a lot of things with “seven tips” and “top 10 ways” – in other words, a how-to. For example, one article said the most important thing in developing resilience in children was fostering a sense of being in control of their lives. That sounds right. But what if it isn’t? You could even argue that expecting to take charge is part of white supremacy. It’s a white cultural standard to expect that what we do will fix things. In my opinion, it gets in the way.

Personally, I’m at my most resilient when I stop trying to control outcomes. When I turn to other people for help. I pray for strength, strength comes, from where I do not know. But wherever that is, it’s not from me toughing it out alone. Ask people in recovery from any substance, and we will tell you, as soon as we say, “Thanks, I’ve got this,” we trip and fall. Happens every time.

I am a big fan of stories. Last year, when I was contemplating transplant, I had to hear a lot of statistics about outcomes. They have to tell you some pretty awful numbers. That one third of all lung transplant patients don’t make it a year after the surgery, for example. But working in the respiratory rehab program, I found models of resilience. In front of every treadmill machine were pictures and stories of people with lung transplants: the woman who ran the New York City marathon. The man who went scuba diving six months after surgery. The couple dancing at their grandson’s wedding, and you can’t tell which one had the transplant. This stuff is hard work. Setbacks and complications are always possible. But looking at these people, I could imagine myself whole again. I could keep working.

What or who inspires resilience in you? I recommend Maya Angelou’s “Still I Rise.” Watch Dr. Angelou on the video. Look into her eyes, knowing how much she has struggled. May her strength be infectious, her laughter contagious. And may we all find resilience, wherever we are in life.

In faith,

Barbara

www.eliotchapel.org
**Care of Your Minister After Lung Transplant**

I am now taking medications to suppress my immune system to avoid rejecting my brand-new lungs. This makes me very vulnerable to viruses, especially in crowds of people. Here are some precautions I will need to take and need your help with. Instead of doing the receiving line and the coffee hour, I will remain on the chancel near the pulpit after worship. If you would like to talk with me, please come up, but please also keep some distance. If you are sick, even with a tiny cold, I ask you to stay home from church if I am preaching that day. If you have come to church and find yourself coughing, sneezing, etc., please sit in the back. As I’ve said earlier, I need to avoid shaking hands with and hugging people. This is wisdom I have received from people who have been transplanted years ago and are thriving today. Thank you for your continued care of me.

**Chili and Games Night**

Are you coming? Don’t miss this fun family event! Enter your favorite chili or dessert into competition. There are two categories for chili, regular and vegetarian. If you don’t want to enter the cook-off, come be a judge! After the sampling and voting for your favorite chili and dessert, we’ll break into several groups to play games. We sure do hope you and your family can join us for Chili and Games on Saturday, February 29. The event begins at 5:30 pm with tasting and judging. Ticket prices are $5.00 for a single and $10 for a family. We will have a 50/50 game going that night in addition to the other fun games of the evening. All proceeds from the night will go toward the Defeat the Deficit campaign. If you are entering the cook-off, please arrive at the chapel at 5:15 pm so we can have your entry ready to go when the doors open. Winners of the cook-off will receive fabulous prizes. Please bring your craziest mugs for the chili tasting. Look for us at a table in Adams Hall, sign up on the bulletin board, or on [Signup Genius](#). Hope to see you there!

**Sharing Our Bounty**

In February, we will share our offerings with [Metropolitan Congregations United (MCU)](https://mcustlouis.org). Eliot Chapel is a member of this community organization that brings together religious congregations, community groups, and individuals to work for a common purpose: to create a better life for all residents. MCU acknowledges that the racism in the systems that order our society has created what we now understand as the School to Prison Pipeline. MCU has been working to change the policies and procedures of school districts, police departments, and the juvenile courts in the St. Louis metropolitan area. MCU wants to keep our students in school!

Eliot Chapel members worked in partnership with MCU to successfully get [Clean MO on the ballot and passed](https://mcustlouis.org). We will continue to fight to keep our legislators from dismantling what the public clearly supported. Eliot members are continuing to gather signatures on the Medicaid Expansion ballot initiative for a few months, and we will continue to work in partnership with MCU as part of Eliot Chapel’s [UU the VOTE](https://mcustlouis.org).

For more information, visit [mcustlouis.org](https://mcustlouis.org).
Eliot Chapel Religious Education

Strength & Resilience: Youth Sunday 2020
On Sunday, February 9, Eliot’s Senior High Youth Group will lead the 9:30 and 11:00 worship services for the Eliot community. This year’s worship theme is "Strength & Resilience". We invite you to join them for music, homilies, storytelling, and community, all led by Eliot’s own imaginative youth!

Featured Religious Education Class: 9:30 Kindergarten & 1st Grade
This month’s featured Religious Education (RE) class is the 9:30 Kindergarten & 1st Grade class. Children gather each Sunday at 9:30 for fellowship, circle time, lighting the chalice, and exploring Unitarian Universalist values. This year’s main focus so far has been environmental justice, racial justice, and UU identity.

Huge thanks go to all of the Religious Education volunteer leaders and staff members for the love, care, and support they share with Eliot’s young UUs, and to your pledge dollars for making this experience possible each Sunday.

2019 Tax Statements
2019 Tax Statements were emailed via REALM the last week in January 2020. You should have received a link that opened a .pdf file for you to print. If you do not have an email address on file, then a paper tax statement was mailed to you. If you do not receive a 2019 Tax Statement:

1. Log in to your REALM Account. Starting on February 1 and ending on April 15, 2020, a Print Tax Statement button is available for you to print a paper version of your 2019 Tax Statement.
2. If you do not have a REALM Account, please go to onrealm.org and set up an account using the email address the church has on file for you.
3. If all else fails, contact frontoffice@eliotchapel.org and request that a paper statement be USPS mailed or emailed to you.

Weather Policy Reminder
Eliot Chapel strives to be open but there are times when it is unsafe to do so. In inclement or extreme weather, check the Chapel’s voicemail, the website, Facebook, local media, or in REALM for information regarding the cancellation or late start for Sunday and RE Services, group meetings, and office closings. Decisions to cancel Sunday worship services will be made the day before. All members, friends, and staff are urged to use discretion when making choices about traveling in times of hazardous weather conditions.
**Winter Nature Communion**

**Day Trip**
Join us for some late winter nature communion on **Saturday, February 22**. All members and friends are welcome. We particularly encourage those who have not been to the property before to consider attending the day hike to get to know Eliot’s 670-acre retreat near Hermann, Missouri. See you there!

An optional guided hike or two will be offered, but feel free to come out and do your own thing or do nothing! Bring sturdy shoes and provisions for the day. Meet at the Eliot Chapel parking lot at 9:00 am to caravan or carpool (or come out separately if you prefer). Email bergfriedinfo@eliotchapel.org at least 48 hours ahead to let us know you are coming.

**Bergfried Cottage**
Remember that the Bergfried Cottage is available for rent by Eliot members and friends at $35/night and upcoming weekends are open for reservation. The cottage features: a bedroom with double bed, day room with 2 twins, and three movable floor mattresses; fully equipped kitchen; 1 bath; and heating and A/C.

Write to bergfriedreservations@eliotchapel.org to make arrangements.

–Shawn Cummings for the Bergfried Stewardship Team

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**Defeat the Deficit!**

Each Sunday after services, you can buy a chance at a reserved spot in Eliot Chapel’s parking lot. The spot is reserved for you 24/7 for the month. Dotty Storer won February’s spot. Congratulations, Dotty, and thank you for participating! You can buy a chance for March’s spot now. It’s only $10; no more than 100 tickets will be sold so your chances are good! The drawing is held at the end of the month. There is a new raffle each month. Thank you!

We’ve had great Eliot Eats! events this year. We don’t have anything scheduled for February yet; keep an ear out for news so you don’t miss your chance to gather with the Eliot community and have a great area eatery give back to us. YEA! (Young Eliot Adults) plans Eliot Eats! events with the goal of variety in cuisines and price points. Please join us whenever you can!

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**Save the Date!**

**Women’s Weekend**
May 15-17, 2020
Toddhall Retreat Center in Columbia, IL

**Make Time for Yourself and Renew Your Energy!**
Join us for a time of relaxation, rejuvenation, and illuminating workshops to feed the mind, body, and spirit. Stay one night, two nights, or come for Saturday only. Toddhall Retreat Center is located 30 minutes from Kirkwood, 38 minutes from St. Charles, and 48 minutes from Alton.

Women’s Weekend is… a retreat offered for women of Eliot Chapel, friends, family, and other women of Unitarian churches in the surrounding area; a spiritual time where we can enjoy the beauty of nature, spiritual community, and our on-site Sunday morning worship service; and a bounty of amazing activities!

Registration begins March 15. If you have questions, please email womensweekend@eliotchapel.org.
Music Notes 🎵

March 1 is Music Sunday!

Our combined choirs and orchestra are presenting “Awakening to Blessing” by our UU friends in Golden, Colorado, Keith Arnold and Rev. Wendy Williams. This six-movement work was inspired in 2016 by the need for a Unitarian blessing. Each of the six movements takes a different approach to what it means to experience blessing, to live a life of blessing, or to be open to blessing. There’s a lot of fun packed into this work! Here’s what Keith says of the movements:

1. **Awakening to Blessing** Begins with the inky darkness of space, and explores our own creation and our role in the universe: “Called into this world, chosen for these days, we are blessed by this life.”

2. **Altar of Now** A Latin beat, the rhythm on “awaken to this day” and the tone-cluster pitches simply came to me unbidden while reading the words. The invitation is to find one’s life in this very moment: “Your life is unfolding on the altar of now.”

3. **Becoming** “Awakened to love, being is becoming,” describes the sense of awakening (through the bells, the crystal bowl, the short staccato choral interjections), while the instruments describe the movement of a surprising river that moves from rapids to a broad slow water flow.

4. **These are the hands** In a gospel style, this movement is intended to be accompanied by blessing of congregation members’ hands.

5. **If there are words** The slowest and simplest/most straightforward movement. An encouragement to let one’s voice bless the world.

6. **Born in love** Inspired by the Kutandara Marimba Ensemble in Colorado, this final movement circles from joy “We were born in love...” through pain, “Somehow we forgot...” and back to a celebration to bring everyone into the circle of love.

Our Shared Offering on Music Sunday will go to the Association for Unitarian Universalist Ministries (AUUMM), formerly the UU Musicians Network (UUMN) This organization has been a nurturing resource of musical ideas and education my entire career at Eliot Chapel. Much of the music we sing and play at Eliot has come from the AUUMM. I hope our generous offering will be a testament to the role it has played in our lives as I retire. Thank you!

**COMING UP**

**Featured Musicians in Worship**

- **Sunday, February 2**
  Eliot Choir & Dr. David Nalesnik, piano

- **Sunday, February 9**
  Our talented Eliot Youth

- **Sunday, February 16**
  Home Remedy & Chamber Singers

- **Sunday, February 23**
  Chalice Family Choir, Women’s Chorale, & Gail Hintz, piano

**Friends of Music**

Friends of Music present a concert on Sunday, February 16 at 3:00 pm in the Eliot Sanctuary featuring baritone Robert McNichols singing Schubert’s "Dichterliebe." Cellist Beverly Field and pianist Toni Pearson will perform Beethoven’s Sonata Op. 5, no. 2.

On Sunday, March 1 at 3:00 pm, the Arianna String Quartet will return for their annual FOMC concert!

**Bathroom Closed**

The girls bathroom in the RE Wing is closed until further notice. When the snow accumulates on the roof and then slowly melts, freezes, melts, etc., the RE wing roof leaks on the playground side of the building. The current roof will be replaced with a high solid silicone coating as soon as weather permits. Once the roof is replaced and the bathroom cleaned up, it will be available.
And the Survey Says...

Many thanks to all of you who completed the Board of Trustees’ survey this past October! The Board received a lot of valuable feedback and is grateful for the effort you put forth to share your opinions, ideas, and concerns with us. Responses were mostly consistent with the previous survey which was conducted in 2017.

Key findings from the survey indicate that respondents:

- Consider Eliot Chapel to be a source of comfort, although they receive varying degrees of support from the congregation.
- Believe that each of the Eliot Chapel Ends is important and are fairly satisfied with the progress made toward each end.
- Would like to see greater involvement from members, and are especially interested in intergenerational community building.
- Want greater visibility from Eliot’s leaders and more transparency with respect to finances and budgeting.

The full report is available here. The Board will be meeting this month to dig deeper into the survey results and determine a plan of action.

Leadership Development Facilitated by the Nominating Committee

Know Someone Willing to Be of Service to Help Shape Eliot’s Future?

Service is essential to keeping our congregation thriving. It comes in many forms: stewardship, board membership, committee work, and other leadership opportunities. The Nominating and Leadership Development Committee is asking you to share your skills and knowledge (or nominate a willing candidate) to be considered and trained as a prospect for future leadership positions in the Eliot community.

The annual leadership development event will be held Saturday morning, February 8. This is a fun, engaging event that’s open to all members. Participation is by no means a commitment; rather it’s an opportunity to explore what leadership looks like for our faith.

Management expert Warren Bennis once stated, "Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality." We thank all of the former, present, and future leaders of Eliot for their commitment to putting into action our vision of creating a just world through vibrant, beloved community.

For more information, email Jeanne Olson at nominating@eliotchapel.org or reach out to one of the committee members here.

Eliot Chapel Nominating and Leadership Development Committee

Jeanne Olson  David Rowan
Todd Stark  Trina Priese
Gail Rock

The Nominating and Leadership Development Committee is committed to providing ongoing leadership development to serve the long-term needs of our vibrant church.

Music Director Search Update

Your search team has been finalizing details on the new director's job description and is now beginning to share the posting with various organizations.

To see the posting, go to the homepage on Eliot's website and click the link to the new 'Music Director Job Opening' page. Feel free to share this link with any potential candidates who qualify for the position.
Join Eliot Chapel on Friday, March 6 for our Second Annual Trivia Night! Gather your friends for a night of fun!

Turning the Page will include an experience auction and gift basket raffle. The experience auction will be held online (eBay style) for the week preceding trivia night and conclude after the sixth round of trivia. Watch for the auction link! We'll also have a 50/50, a table theme competition, and other games.

Trivia rounds will be on a broad range of subjects but plan to decorate your table with your favorite books or authors for the theme competition!

Childcare for Eliot families can be requested by sending an email to eliotchapelre@gmail.com no later than 12:00 pm on February 29. There are a limited number of spaces available so if you need childcare, be sure to reserve as soon as possible.

This is a BYOB event; bring your favorite beverages and snacks. Soda and popcorn will be provided. Purchase your tickets online at eliotchapel.ticketspice.com/trivia-night-and-auction-2020. For questions, contact trivia@eliotchapel.org.

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**222 Update**

We are still on schedule sometime this summer to demolish the 222 E. Argonne house and restore the lot to a parklike setting as per the Kirkwood Historic District Commission's request. We are planning the demolition for July 2020 when the Eliot Chapel Nursery School is not in session, there is only one Sunday service, and the smallest number of groups and renters use the church property and parking lot. July is the best time to inconvenience the least number of Chapel and rental activities.
UU the Vote Launch
On January 12, Eliot Chapel hosted a UU the Vote launch party with 35 people in attendance. Nationwide, UUA reports there were 120 watch parties and 470 individuals tuned in! That’s more than 1,500 people total. You will find follow-up information at UU the Vote. Eliot’s follow-up meeting was held on January 21 to move us into action. Read This Week at Eliot for details of how to be involved from now until after the November 2020 election. There was an overall theme of partnering with other community organizations to strengthen our work to improve voter engagement.

Here are some of the participants’ commitments:

- get people to register to vote/register voters
- work against voter suppression
- work with local universities to get students engaged to overcome hurdles to voting
- phone banking
- canvassing
- writing local and national representatives
- support local candidates that reflect our values
- get the youth involved
- protect CLEAN MO
- transporting voters to the polls
- assist the UU the Voters in battleground states like Wisconsin

Social Justice in Action at Eliot Chapel

To hear about upcoming and late-breaking social justice opportunities, keep an eye on “This Week at Eliot” and be sure to sign up to receive emails in your interest area: eepurl.com/QlcFv
You will always be given the chance to update your profile and subscription preferences at the bottom of each email.

Siding with Love, Taking Action
February’s Social Justice in Action Assembly
The time is now for all good UUs to come to the aid of our Democracy. Our 5th Principle states: The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and society at large.

Join our Social Justice in Action members on Tuesday, February 18 in Adams Hall at 7:00 pm as we discuss what we as individuals plan to do this electoral year to protect democracy, and to explore what we as a congregation can do. Will you write postcards? Will you join the All Read? Will you vote? What else can/will you do?

Eliot Garden News
The Eliot Gardeners are continuing to work through the winter. Winter is a good time to eradicate honeysuckle and other invasive plants as they continue to grow while most native plants are dormant. We welcome anyone who wants to help! We will work as long as the temperature is above 30° and it’s not raining. Our February dates will be Wednesdays, February 5 and 19, plus Saturdays, February 1 and 22.
Spring All Read

Stop by Adams Hall each Sunday in February to take a look at the Spring All Read, Out of the Wreckage by George Monbiot. Sign up for a discussion group and order a pre-paid copy ($12). The book fits perfectly with our social justice team’s focus on governance and voting rights this year. Waking Up White by Debby Irving also will be offered. You may register online now for a discussion group. Groups will be meeting in April and May, so get your copy soon! Click to learn more about the book.

Immigration Justice

Asylum Seekers Are Welcome at Eliot Chapel!

We are so close! A friend of Eliot Chapel has offered space in her home for a sponsored asylum seeker. Rev. Dottie Mathews is soliciting border network organizations for a match. Meanwhile, IFCLA asked Eliot to house a young immigrant father in detention for over a month due to unpaid traffic tickets and an outrageous $10,000(!) bail. We offered a home, but IFCLA found a more permanent solution with space for his family.

So for a second time our Immigration Justice team said “yes” to an immigrant seeking justice. Both efforts had happy (really, hopeful) endings. Our readiness to offer concrete support, especially housing, makes a difference. In the words of our Ends Statement, these actions “…create a more just society…[and]…will make a positive difference within, among, and beyond ourselves.” At any moment we could be called. We need to know you care and will meet the need.

To those who have offered financial support, please make those contributions now.

- **By check:** Write on the memo "Asylum Program"
- **Online:** Friends and members should use REALM From the drop down menu, select “Asylum Program”

To find out how YOU can help our asylum sponsorship program,

- Contact immigration@eliotchapel.org; and
- Come to our next team meeting Tuesday, February 25 at 6:00 pm in Room 006.

For additional information about the Project, click [here](#) and find the Project’s handbook [here](#).

Environmental Justice

The Environmental Justice team will meet on Monday, February 17, at 7:00 pm in Room 005. We welcome anyone who would like to join us, as we always need new ideas. We are working on completing our application for Green Sanctuary, a UUA designation for congregations who have taken a number of steps to become more sustainable and involved in Climate Change or Environmental Justice. For more information, please contact us at environmentjustice@eliotchapel.org.
On the Calendar

Women’s Alliance
Women’s Alliance provides the women of Eliot Chapel with an opportunity for fellowship, intellectual stimulation, involvement, and growth. Meetings are held on the first and third Tuesdays of each month at 9:30 am in Adams Hall to discuss books and provocative topics. On the fourth Tuesday, there is usually an outing to a local destination. All women are welcome.

February Meetings
Tuesday, February 4 – A Man Called Ove by Fredrik Backman.
   Discussion Leader – Sharon McCarron.
Tuesday, February 18 – Pysanky, Ukrainian Egg Decorating. Coordinator – Barb Jones.
Tuesday, February 25 – Field Trip: Holocaust Museum & Learning Center.

Eliot’s Grief Support Group meets
on Thursday, February 13 and February 20 at 3:00 pm in the Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray Room. Everyone is welcome.

The Pastoral Care Associates Team will meet on Sunday, February 23 at 12:15 pm in Room 006.

Are you interested in membership at Eliot Chapel?
Rev. Jim will meet with prospective members at Eliot Chapel at 10:30 am and 12:00 noon on Sunday, February 2. If you have questions about Unitarian Universalism, Eliot Chapel, or are ready to sign the membership book, you are welcome to attend. The meetings will take place in Room 006 on the lower level.

Eliot Chapel Plays Together
Eliot Chapel is a place of worship, social awareness, and community action but it’s also a place to find friendship and fun! We gather weekly for coffee hour to visit and catch up but sometimes, we go big and we have since the early days! Whether it’s an art show in 1971 (below), Las Vegas Night from the late 70s (right), or a series of mystery dinners in the early 2000s (lower right), folks at Eliot know how to throw a party and we enjoy each other’s company. You’ll have a chance to carry on this tradition next month when we have a series of events, starting with trivia night (see page 7) on March 6. Don’t miss it!

Do you have a story to tell about Eliot’s history?
Email news@eliotchapel.org.
Recognizing Eliot’s Superheroes

Each month Eliot recognizes individuals who have done something to inspire us with their faithfulness, hard work, and committed joyful spirits! If you have someone to nominate for Volunteer of the Month, let us know at frontoffice@eliotchapel.org.

It’s entirely appropriate in Black History Month to recognize Janet Solecki as our February Volunteer of the Month. Janet serves as Eliot Chapel’s liaison to the Meacham Park Neighborhood Improvement Association (MNIA). In that position, she tirelessly heads up multiple events throughout the year that enable Eliot folk to get involved with our neighbors in the larger community. Just last month, she facilitated Eliot’s sixth year presence at Kirkwood’s Martin Luther King celebration, organizing an outreach booth. In August, Pride in the Park was a school kickoff event in Meacham Memorial Park with craft activities and other fun, along with backpack and school supply distribution. Eliot Chapel has marched in the Meacham Park Homecoming Parade and taken part in the festivities. In addition to this, Janet never hesitates to lend a hand around the church as well and is involved with the Eliot Gardeners, the flower team, helps with coffee hour, and many other things. If you’re looking for ways to get involved at Eliot, talk to her about working with MNIA. Janet walks the walk of racial justice and we thank her for that!

Please Remember

The family of Eliot member Dot Brownfield who passed away on January 7.

Anne Meneely and her family as they mourn the death of her mother on December 29, 2019.

Nancy Russell, who is recovering at home from hip replacement surgery.

Tim Gardner who is recovering from a procedure he had recently at Barnes.

Welcome

Eliot Chapel welcomes our newest members!

Sydney Korinek Fuchs  Cynthia McDonnell  Penny Schafer
Sunday, February 2 – 9:30 and 11:00 am
“The Great Resilience” – Rev. Barbara H. Gadon
The “great migration” refers to thousands and thousands of African Americans who moved from South to North in unorganized but massive numbers. What is St. Louis’ part in this movement that Isabel Wilkerson calls “The biggest step the servant class took without taking permission”? How can it inspire resilience in us today?
Featured Musicians: Eliot Choir; Dr. David Nalesnik, piano

Sunday, February 9 – 9:30 and 11:00 am
“Strength & Resilience” – Eliot’s Senior High Youth Group
We invite you to join our Senior High Youth Group for music, homilies, storytelling, and community, all led by Eliot’s own imaginative youth.
Featured Musicians: Eliot Chapel Youth

Sunday, February 16 – 9:30 and 11:00 am
“LovingKindness” – Rev. Helen Carroll
Love is what we are born with. Fear is what we learn. The spiritual journey is the unlearning of fear and the acceptance of love back into our hearts.
– Marianne Williamson
Even as confident, competent, self-reliant human beings, we often crave love and find ourselves lonely. There is pain where we yearn for joy. Our response to the isolation of the modern world is to connect with a level of love that is a real connection to all beings. In Buddhism, it’s called Lovingkindness.
Featured Musicians: Home Remedy; Chamber Singers

Sunday, February 23 – 9:30 and 11:00 am
“Three Stories of Persistence” – Rev. Barbara H. Gadon
Rev. Barbara will share stories of persistence that invite your personal reflection and witness.
Featured Musicians: Chalice Family Choir; Women’s Chorale; Gail Hintz, piano

Dream with Me
MARCH 7 & 8