



The Chicago Area UU Council (CAUUC) Spring Conference will be held on Saturday, May 8th 9:30am-12pm and be conducted via Zoom video conference. There is NO FEE required to participate. The CAUUC annual meeting will be held after the conference.

CONFERENCE TOPIC: Re-opening and Reimagining Church.

We are 1 year into the pandemic and many congregations are in the planning stages of re-opening the doors to in-person gatherings. Our panel discussion will be related to how the lessons learned from the pandemic will be applied as we go forward and how our UU principles inform the decisions we must make about reopening. Rather than just going back to the way that things were done pre-pandemic, now is the time when some congregations are reimagining every aspect of church from worship to religious education to board/committee meetings, social justice, and everything in between.

Why? When worship, religious education, and meetings for most congregations went online and virtual, there were some important discoveries. You might have found it convenient to access church events from...anywhere. You might feel good about the reduced carbon footprint and travel time reduction to participate in church activities. Perhaps you found ways to maintain some level of connection with former members of your congregation who have moved. But not all of the learnings and practices were positive and reaffirming of our UU values. Access for some was difficult due to technical proficiency, lack of Internet services, or lack of money to afford it. Some congregations didn't have all of the expertise that would be required of them to move to *everything* online.

There are other inequities that we face as the COVID-19 vaccine is rolled out to only a portion of the population. There will be those who are vaccinated and those who aren't. Some with vaccines are already wondering when they can gather. But how will we ensure that anyone who wants to participate in any aspect of church community life can do so before we reach the so called "herd immunity".

How should our discoveries about the benefits and the inequities (that we're still learning about) shape our congregational policies as we reopen? How do the answers to the questions and the lessons from the pandemic inform our re-opening and our reimagination of church?

Join the conference to learn and share!

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