

September 2008



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Decatur

3773 N. MacArthur Rd.
Decatur, IL 62526
Phone: (217) 875-5442
www.uufd.org
www.myspace.com/uufd_il



Minister:

Rev. John Biedler
Church Office:
(217) 875-5442
Other Phone:
(217) 423-7349
Cell:
(217) 972-2184
jbiedler@uufd.org

Office Hours:

Tuesday evenings
5 – 7 p.m.
Wednesday & Thursday
mornings
10 a.m. – noon

President:

Julie Pajer

Past President:

Linda Shroyer

President Elect:

Heather Stoa

Vice President:

Tom Meyen

Treasurer:

Mark Sorensen

Secretary:

Mary Lovell

Board Members at Large:

Ron Shafer
Dave Snoeyenbos
Rita Schwake

UUFd Trust Board:

Ken Robertson
Vern Thistlethwaite
Dave Snoeyenbos

Upcoming Services

All Sunday services begin at 10:15 AM.

There is religious education for children and child care for babies.

September 7 - "Water Communion & Homecoming" by Rev. John Biedler

Homecoming...the word signifies our return to a welcoming place. At the UU Fellowship of Decatur the first Sunday of the traditional church year is a kind of homecoming. We celebrate each September with eagerness to see familiar faces again and begin the round of services, classes, and activities that will keep us busy and enrich our lives in the coming year. Homecoming Sunday is our annual "ingathering," traditionally the first Sunday after Labor Day. We all, adults and children, gather in the sanctuary to hear stories of people's experiences over the summer months. Bring your container of water or a rock from someplace you visited and tell us about your experience. If you forget, we have representative water you can designate.

September 14 - "Vision Quest-Part 1" by Rev. John Biedler

A biblical writer asserts: "Without a vision, a people perish." A sustaining and inspiring dimension of any congregation's life is its ability to have a vision of its future. What makes vision more than an idea is the way that vision informs and compels a congregation toward its future. A vision needs to be more than the cherished possession of a few -- it needs to be a shared vision by the many. In this sermon, Rev. Biedler will empower you to have both a personal as well as a communal vision.

September 21 - "Vision Quest-Part 2" by Rev. John Biedler

We often limit our vision to what we can conceive as possible or to bring it to the level of the current reality, whether personally or as a congregation. Yet a vision, to be fully empowering, needs to allow us to take a long-term view of our influence on others, especially as a congregation. With a shared vision as a congregation, it enables it to move from the status quo towards an overarching goal. A shared vision can create new ways of thinking and acting. We all are living out some kind of vision – today we simply articulate its unfolding.

September 28 - "Having Principles" by Cassandra Meyen

This will be an interactive program for all ages, offering a youth perspective of our UU Principles and how to incorporate them into our busy adult lives. Come and explore some new ways to help yourself and others to "be good."

Next Newsletter deadline: September 15, 2008

Who, What and Why of the UU Fellowship

The Who, What and Why of the UU Fellowship of Decatur? Many of you may have been attending for weeks, months or even years and not had an opportunity to hear an overview of what makes our religious community work. How has it flourished for the past 55 years here in Decatur? What is our vision for the future? And how will we accomplish that vision? What are our challenges as a faith community and what's at stake in those challenges? In three classes led by Rev. Biedler, you will be given a kind of "UU 101" experience. If you are new to our Fellowship, or a long time attendee, please come to this three-part series on the Sunday afternoons of September 7, 14 and 21st. from 2 – 3:30 p.m. Please sign up on the foyer table.

Slow Down and Enjoy the Drive!!

I read Julie Pajer's story in the UU August Newsletter about increasing her savings on gasoline by reducing her speed. We decided to do the same. First I need to tell you we both drive the Toyota Prius Hybrid and like Julie we have a miles-per-gallon (MPG) calculator in the console. Usually we average 45-48 MPG on each tankful and Chelso drives 68-73 MPH (miles per hour) on the interstate. However, on a recent Sunday we took Chelso's Prius and set the cruise at 55 MPH and arrived in St Louis registering 55.2 MPG. This past week, I drove my Prius 180 miles to Chicago and back. On my way North I registered 61.3 MPG cruising at 55 MPH and on my way home I registered 62 MPG upon arrival in Decatur!!!

I recently read an on-line article titled 'Zen and the Art of Hypermiling' which pointed out the reduced stress when you drive 55 MPH. Here's an excerpt from the article:

".... even when the Interstates were too full of traffic to optimize my hypermiling, sitting in cruise-control at, or even a little below the speed limit, is so much less stressful than trying to go 10 miles over the speed limit. Instead of getting angry at the drivers that refuse to yield the left lane to faster drivers, or the semi's that cut you off at the last minute, I marveled at how simple and stress-free driving becomes when you remove yourself from the rat race mentality that big city living often breeds, especially on the open roads of the US interstate system."

To read the whole article go to:

http://www.soultek.com/clean_energy/hybrid_cars/zen_and_the_art_of_hypermiling.htm

Peaceful driving and savings on gasoline :-)

June Allison

Rev. Biedler's Hours

Office hours for Rev. Biedler in September are Tuesday evenings from 5 – 7 p.m.; Wednesdays Sept. 10 and 24th from 10 a.m. – noon; and every Thursday morning from 10 a.m. – noon beginning Sept 11th. You may reach John at the church office by calling (217) 875-5442; or by calling his cell phone at (217) 972-2184. He is also available at other times by appointment.

Religious Education Classes

September 7 - Grandparents' Day - Liz Richards

September 14 - UU Principle 1: "Each person is important" - Cassandra Meyen

September 21 - Fall Equinox Celebration - Kathy Kline and June Allison

September 28 - Multi-generational Service - No RE Class

September 2008 Calendar of Events

All activities take place at the Fellowship, unless otherwise noted.

Visitors are always welcome!

Tuesday, September 2nd

- 7:00 p.m. — Eckhart Tolle Discussion Group
- 7:00 p.m. — Christian Practices Covenant Group

Wednesday, September 3rd

- 10:00 a.m. — Wednesday Morning Covenant Group

Sunday, September 7th

- Drumming Circle
- 2:00 p.m. — The What & Why of UUFDF. Please sign up on the foyer table.

Wednesday, September 10th

- 6:00 p.m. — Women's Book Group

Thursday, September 11th

- 7:00 p.m. — UUFDF Buddhist Group at Ankrom's house

Saturday, September 13th

- 11:30 a.m. First annual meeting and membership sign up for the Buy Green Coop, Inc. at the fellowship (RE Room). There will be a free Chili lunch.
- Community Food Bank Sunday

Sunday, September 14th

- 2:00 p.m. — The Why of UUFDF. Please sign up on the foyer table.

Tuesday, September 16th

- 7:00 p.m. — Eckhart Tolle Discussion Group
- 7:00 p.m. — Christian Practices Covenant Group

Wednesday, September 17th

- 10:00 a.m. — Wednesday Morning Covenant Group

Sunday, September 21st

- 12:10 p.m. — Social Action Covenant Group's first gathering in the Sanctuary
- 2:00 p.m. — The Why of UUFDF. Please sign up on the foyer table.

Thursday, September 25th

- 7:00 p.m. — UUFDF Buddhist Group at Ankrom's house

Group discussion topics:

Buddhist Group—The UUFDF Buddhist Group will no longer meet at the Fellowship Hall. We will be meeting every 2nd and 4th Thursdays at Terry Ankrom's house, 2480 West Main Street, Decatur, Illinois, 62522. For further information call 217-428-1807 or email terryankrom@gmail.com.

Community Food Bank—Please bring a donation of nonperishable food items to be taken to our local food banks on this Sunday

Drumming Circle—Come join our monthly drumming circle on Sunday September 7th at Noon after the morning service at UUFDF. Bring your drums, tambourines, etc - this is an event for all ages!! Questions: June Allison #423-1813

Eckhart Tolle Discussion Group—The Eckhart Tolle Discussion Group meets the first and third Tuesdays of each month at 7 pm in the Fellowship sanctuary. This month we will meet September 2nd and 16th. The discussion group seeks to explore the teachings and spiritual philosophy of Eckhart Tolle, a contemporary mystic, through discussions, audio-visual presentations, and silent meditations. Presently we are viewing and discussing a spiritual retreat with Eckhart Tolle filmed in Copenhagen, Denmark in 2004 entitled "The Art of Presence." All are welcome; no prior knowledge of Tolle's teachings is required. Contact Mel Weinstein (763-0509) for additional information

The Social Action Covenant Group—will have an organizing and brainstorming meeting on Sunday, Sept. 21 at 12:10 p.m., right after the discussion period with Rev. Biedler. We will design our mission statement and projects for the coming year, which will include serving meals at the Good Samaritan Inn and other community contributions. Join us and help make a decided difference in our community and world.

The Christian Practices Covenant Group—meets the first and third Tuesdays each month, Sept. 2 and 16 from 7:00 and to 8:30 p.m. at the Fellowship Hall. All are welcome to join for discussions on the life and teachings of Jesus as the group reads "The Heart of Christianity" by Marcus Borg.

The Wednesday Morning Covenant Group—meets the first and third Wednesdays of the month, Sept. 3 and 17, from 10 a.m. to 12. Please join us as we discuss the book by Eckhart Tolle "A New Earth: Awakening to Your Life's Purpose" by Eckhart Tolle. Guests welcome.

Women's Book Group—The Women's Book Club will meet on Wednesday, September 10th at 6 pm at the home of Anne Reeser. The book is The Lemon Tree by Sandy Tolani. Please call Anne at 762-5835 to RSVP.

Letters from John...

The simple act of signing your name to the membership book of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Decatur can be a deeply significant decision for you, and rightly so. By becoming a member you are expressing to others of this congregation a personal commitment to its continued existence and well-being. It says you believe in what it stands for and want it to remain active and vibrant within our community. Your reasons for wanting this can be many and varied.

The renowned Unitarian Universalist minister A. Powell Davies wrote, "When you find a church which expresses the outlook and values you yourself hold as vital, you are depriving both yourself and those values of needed strength if you fail to identify yourself with that church." Joining a congregation such as ours means essentially three things:

You are in fundamental sympathy with the principles of freedom and reason in religion and life. This is the basis for our creedless church.

You commit yourself to the importance of an organized religious fellowship. Ideas and ideals must have a vehicle and embodiment in the world. People who think and work together for the values in which they believe have a better chance of achieving them than people who do not.

You accept the responsibilities that go with membership in any human community. Within the limits of your ability and in line with your personal choice, you are ready to give energy, time, money, and best thought to the furthering of the ideas you prize."

On an institutional level, only members participate in congregational voting, such as the officers of the Board; in fact only members can become officers. Only members vote on Trustees for the endowment fund and by being a member you have a say in the selection and retention of the minister; as well as say so regarding the budget and its expenditure.

As I launch a new series of classes on Unitarian Universalism in September (see the announcement), I'm hoping many of you reading this newsletter will let me know of anyone you think might be interested in becoming a member, including yourself if you are not as yet. I personally can think of at least ten or more people who have been attending our services and activities for some time now that might, if asked, want to become a member...but I could use your help here. If you know of someone, you could even invite them yourself, and then let me know their response. I'll be glad to contact them.

Either way, I think there are many who would appreciate just being asked, and in doing so, hearing from us that we would love for them to join our religious community.

Since Unitarian Universalist societies come in a great variety of shapes and sizes with a wide range of programs and special interests, we would like you to know the essence of UUFD. Like all UU congregations, we are as unique as the people who comprise this congregation, yet there are common concerns and fundamental principles that hold us together.

As UU member Morjorie Achley wrote...Perhaps you have been looking for a church where:

Your doubts are not ridiculed.

Your guilts are lightened.

Your griefs are comforted.

Your joys are celebrated.

Your children are taught all religions.

Your talents are nurtured.

Your concerns are shared.

Your reason is honored.

Your friendships are deepened.

Your love of art and beauty is expanded.

Your need to serve others is fostered.

Your need to laugh is encouraged.

Your individual decision is treasured....

if so, then you have been looking for a Unitarian Universalist congregation. These are our aspirations. If they are yours, we invite you to come join and help promote them.

You may be new to Unitarian Universalism or to this particular congregation, or you may have participated for a long time. But Unitarian Universalism gathers strength as each person who shares this religious perspective makes the commitment to become a member and be counted for freedom and religious toleration. And though we may not have the answers to the unanswerable questions, you will find people here who value imagination, compassion, intellect, heart and independence. Here you will find people who also value self-respect, beauty, and inner harmony.

People who hold a firm belief in personal integrity and freedom are needed to join with others for the preservation of these values. I invite you sign up for this series of classes and, of course, to become a full-fledged member, with all its privileges and responsibilities.

Faithfully yours,

John

Green tips for the month: 10 simple ways to live more earth-friendly

1. Ditch the Paper Towels!

Instead, pick up micro-fiber cloth towels to use all around the house. Thousands of tiny little fibers literally grip and hold onto the dirt and bacteria. The best part? They are machine-washable, so you can use them over and over again. Just spray a surface with a non-toxic, all-purpose cleaner and wipe away with the micro-fiber towels.

2. Java Scrub

The next time you brew a cup of fresh coffee at home, don't toss the used coffee grinds into the trash. First, spoon some warm grinds into your hands and mix it with your favorite hand soap. Now scrub away. The grinds will exfoliate dead skin off your hands and the soap will keep everything squeaky clean. Scatter the remaining grinds around your evergreen shrubs and trees — it's an energizing fertilizer for them!

3. Soy Candles

When burning candles around the house, be sure to choose clean-burning soy candles. Traditional candles are paraffin-based, which is made from non-renewable petroleum. When burned they emit soot and smoke into the air, polluting your indoor air. Yuck! Soy candles are a much cleaner choice and made from — you guessed it — soy beans! They're easy to find and the best part is they burn longer than paraffin candles, so you get more soothing scents for your cents. One final tip: Place unlit soy candles in your sock drawer to gently scent them.

4. Dodge the Drafts

Keep the blustery cold air outdoors by stopping drafts at windows and doors. Place a draft dodger — a long fabric tube — along the edges where cold seeps inside to stop it in its tracks. For smaller windows, you can make your own dodger. Just fill a large sock, such as an athletic sock, with pebbles and tie a knot at the end.

5. Be Sparing With the Paint

Doing some home improvement work this weekend? When painting walls, make sure you buy just enough paint. Use the HGTV.com online paint calculator to help determine the right amount for the job. Select the type of surface you want to paint, the finish and dimensions of the room. This will help prevent buying too much paint and cut down on waste.

6. Put Your Computer to Sleep

Remove the screen saver off your computer. When those flying toasters are activated on your screen, the computer is still running on full power. Instead, put your computer in "sleep" or "standby" mode, so the stroke of a key will wake up your PC right away. You can also save energy at your workplace by making sure your co-workers aren't leaving their computers on all night long. Make it a corporate policy to have all computers shut down at the end of the work day.

7. Recycle Your Cell Phone

Bring your old cell phones to a Call2Recycle box. It's a non-profit program from the Rechargeable Battery Recycling Corporation; they'll recycle your phone for free into new metal products. You'll find these collection boxes in stores like Radio Shack, Best Buy and The Home Depot. You can learn more at www.call2recycle.org.

8. Bring on the Bandanas

Try bandanas instead of paper napkins when entertaining. They're colorful, reusable, inexpensive and a fun way to dress up a table. You can find bandanas in most discount stores and military surplus shops. If you must use paper napkins, look for recycled paper versions that are made from used paper, not trees. Use a decorative hole punch to dress up the edges.

9. Trap Your Trash

Did you know most trash strewn on the street isn't from litterbugs, but from a gust of wind? Ill-fitting trash can lids (or overflowing cans of debris) are the real culprit. Wind blows trash away or a wild animal rips open a plastic trash bag, causing trash to stray all over the place. The solution is simple: just buy a trash can with a tight-fitting lid. Don't toss debris into overflowing public trash cans and — you knew this — recycle whenever you can.

10. Make Donations

If you're trying to find a new home for a piece of furniture, a bag of clothes, an old chandelier or anything that's hard to recycle, give FreeCycle a try. This free website connects people with things to give away with people who need those things. It's organized by ZIP codes, so it will put you into contact with groups in your community. No money can ever exchange hands and everything has to be totally free. You can learn more at www.freecycle.org.

Themes for the Coming Calendar Year

During the church year from September through June, Rev. Biedler will speak on specific topics or themes during his Sunday morning talks. These themes will be supported by newsletter articles, suggested readings and at-home spiritual practices throughout the year. Rev. Biedler will also be leading discussions after each service for those interested. All of this is to support and inspire lives of greater worth and dignity among friends and members of the congregation. Our intention is to continually shape our country's culture and future by all of us becoming the change we want to see in the world. With these ten themes he will also explore the language and knowledge needed to dialogue with people of different perspectives on issues of faith, values, ethics and religion. Please join us in the journey.

September -- Vision

February -- Evil

October -- Creation

March -- Redemption

November-- Democracy

April -- Freedom

December -- God

May -- Mercy

January -- Authority

June -- Transformation

MEDITATION CLASS

Mel Weinstein and Ron Shafer are willing to do a class in meditation starting in October. The class would consist of six sessions of about an hour and a half and run from 7:00-8:30 on Thursday evenings. We have four people who are interested, but we would like to have at least six. If you are interested, contact Ron Shafer at rshfr@shelbywb.coop or see him at a Sunday service.

BOOKS, BITES, BOTANICALS SALE.

Our annual fall money-raiser, "Books, Bites, and Botanicals," will be held from 8 A.M. until 2 P.M. on Saturday, October 25. Books will be collected the week before the sale. Now is the time to sort out the bookcase! If you know of good book donations that must be picked up before then, call Vern Thistlethwaite, 429-5923, to arrange a pickup time. Don't forget to let neighbors, relatives and friends know that we would like very much to receive books and need plants. Homemade food items may be made ahead and frozen - cakes, breads, cookies, bars, pies, candies etc, If you have plants that can be divided or started now for the October Sale, let Marge Evans, 864-2843, or Vern know. Should you have pots to share, we need those, too. We will meet for planting and trimming at the NATURAL EDGE in Mt. Zion on Friday, Aug, 29 at 8:30 A.M. Help is needed - thumbs of any color! The book sorting wine & cheese party will be Sunday evening October 19th starting at 6:00 PM.

Storage Shed Delayed

UUFD's storage shed will not be available until Architecht Jim Alpee has recovered from his surgery and is well enough. Our fellowship may be the recipient of a large donation of rummage trunks, boxes, household items. If anyone on Decatur's West side has a place where we can store boxes of rummage until our storage building is ready, please contact Vern - 429-5923 or email vthistle@comcast.net.



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Decatur

3773 North MacArthur Road, Decatur, IL 62526

September 2008 Issue

**Non Profit Org
U.S. Postage
PAID
Decatur, IL
Permit No. 59**

"Promoting freedom, reason,
And tolerance in religion"

Return Service Requested

Fellowship mission statement:

In a nurturing environment of openness, mutual respect, and friendship, the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Decatur is a welcoming, diverse congregation. We share values and seek to celebrate life and support one another in our inward and outward searches for spiritual meaning, provide a liberal religious presence, and strive for compassion and justice in our community and our world.



September Birthdays

Marjorie Powell	September 06
Olivia Saltus	September 18
Kathy Kline	September 23



To find the universal elements enough; to find the air and the water exhilarating; to be refreshed by a morning walk or an evening saunter; to be thrilled by the stars at night; to be elated over a bird's nest or a wildflower in spring—these are some of the rewards of a simple life
-John Burroughs

For	Contact	At:
Name Tags	Kathy Kline	(217) 875-5442
Address Changes	Carolynn DeVore	ebdevore@insightbb.com
Newsletter submissions	Tim Rooney	timothysrooney@hotmail.com
Website suggestions	June Allison	JuneChelso@springnet1.com or (217) 423-1813

September 2008 ISSUE