

August 2009



# Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Decatur

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**Minister:**

Rev. John Biedler  
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jsbiedler@aol.com

**Office Hours:**

Tuesday, Wednesday and  
Thursday evenings 4:30 to  
6:30 p.m. at the Fellowship

**President:**

Heather Stoa

**Past President:**

Julie Pajer

**Vice President:**

Tim Rooney

**Treasurer:**

Mark Sorensen

**Secretary:**

Mary Lovell

**RE Director:**

Cassandra Meyen

**Board Members at Large:**

Jeanne Robertson  
Rita Schwake  
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**UUF 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.

### August 2 — “Fine Art Photography” by George Nichols

In this illustrated talk, Nichols will define the term “Fine Art Photography” and explain his goal and the path that he took from his first attempt to make a large photograph in 1939 to the present day. He has had more than a dozen solo shows of his photographs at galleries and public venues throughout Central Illinois and is an artist member of Gallery 510 Arts Guild here in Decatur. You may view some of his work in the foyer entrance of our Fellowship. Service leader will be Kathy Sorensen.

### August 9 — “The Evolution of God—Part I” with Rev. John Biedler

PBS recently aired a remarkable Bill Moyers interview of Robert Wright, author of *The Evolution of God*. In this two part series, I will be reviewing and discussing Moyer’s interview and Wright’s book. Moyers had this to say: “Robert Wright has made a convincing case that if circumstances change, god has changed, because the story of god is intrinsic to the human story. But what Wright has not done is to make a convincing case that god exists.” To read a script of Moyers’ interview before the Sunday service, visit: [www.pbs.org/moyers/journal/07172009/profile.html](http://www.pbs.org/moyers/journal/07172009/profile.html) or if you would like a printed copy, let me know and I’ll see that you get one.

### August 16 — “Exploring Hypnotism” by Julie Lauper-Cook, Certified Hypnotherapist

Join us this Sunday as Julie explores hypnosis and the mind / body connection, along with ideas on how we can change our minds to change our lives. Her presentation will include discussion and demonstrations.

### August 23 — “The Evolution of God—Part II” with Rev. John Biedler

### August 30 — “The Origin of Scripture” with Rev. John Biedler

It’s been said that any person’s real “scripture” consists of those words which speak to their needs and give lilt and meaning to their life. If enough people find the same words serving this purpose, they tend to give a special place to them within the community. In this way special significance is attached to the words, and in time may even be ascribed a divine origin. In this sermon I will explore what could be called “the sociological origin of scriptures.”

Next Newsletter deadline: August 15, 2009

## Lammas/First Harvest Ritual and Drumming

Lammas is a celebration of the first harvest of grains, fruits, and vegetables; falling at the midpoint between the Summer Solstice and the Autumnal Equinox. Bring friends, drums, etc., and a snack to share on Saturday, August 1 at 6:30 p.m. at the UUFD

## "Caring & Sharing" at the UUFD

Jane Brooks has graciously accepted the responsibility of coordinating "Caring & Sharing" for us. If you, or anyone you know, has a health problem or other issue which would call for some help, support or well wishes from the congregation, please pass the information along to Jane. She will be happy to notify John and/or the rest of the Fellowship as is appropriate.

Also, if there is someone you haven't seen or heard from in a while and are concerned about, please contact them or contact Jane to make sure they do not need any Moral or physical support from us.

Rita Schwake, Hospitality Chair

## Books, Bites and Botanicals Coming October 10

It's time to box up good, resellable books for the UUFD Books, Bites, and Botanicals Sale Saturday, Oct. 10. Mark your calendar. Your help will be needed. Tell your relatives, friends and neighbors that if they have books to get rid of, we would love to have them for our fall sale. Plants should be started now so that they will be lush for sale in our botanicals room by October 10. And don't let those zucchini go to waste. They can be made in to moist and tasty breads, cookies and muffins for freezing. By starting early, we'll have many choices for our BBB customers.

## Parent Effectiveness Training Class

A Parent Effectiveness Training Class will be offered, beginning in September. P.E.T. is a lively, engaging, class designed to teach parents skills for rearing responsible and happy children. Goals include improved communication, fewer power struggles, better problem solving skills, closer family relationships, and more responsible and receptive children. While the focus will be on parent-child relationships, the skills are equally valuable in strengthening any relationship: family, friends, co-workers, etc. The class meets weekly, eight 3-hour sessions, and includes demonstrations, role playing, coaching, and workbook exercises. It will be co-taught by Mary Clare Cummins and Joan Brown, who have been trained and authorized by Effectiveness Training. The class will be held at First Presbyterian Church, and is intended mainly for members and friends of UUFD and First Pres. The class will have a minimum of eight, and a maximum of 10 - 12 participants. For more information, contact Joan Brown, 877-0880 or Mary Clare Cummins, 428-2324. For more information on the program, go to [www.parenteffectivenessstraining.com](http://www.parenteffectivenessstraining.com)

## Rev. Biedler's Hours

Regular office hours for Rev. Biedler are at the Fellowship every Tuesday and Thursday evening from 4:30 – 6:30 p.m. John is available at other times by appointment and certainly welcomes your calls. You may reach him either by calling his cell phone at (217) 972-2184 or by leaving a message at the church office at (217) 875-5442.

## Religious Education Classes

Sunday the 2nd  
 Sunday the 9th  
 Sunday the 16th  
 Sunday the 23rd  
 Sunday the 30th

# August 2009 Calendar of Events

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

Visitors are always welcome!

## Tuesday, August 4th

- 5:00 p.m. — Youth Science Group
- 7:00 p.m. — Eckhart Tolle Discussion Group

## Wednesday, August 5th

- 10:00 a.m. — Wednesday Morn Covenant Group
- 7:00 p.m. — Humanism

## Tuesday, August 11th

- 5:00 p.m. — Youth Community Group
- 7:00 p.m. — decREAD Group

## Wednesday, August 12th

- 6:00 p.m. — Women's Book Club

## Thursday, August 13th

- 7:00 p.m. — Buddhist Group

## Tuesday, August 18th

- 5:00 p.m. — Youth Science Group
- 7:00 p.m. — Eckhart Tolle Discussion Group

## Wednesday, August 19th

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

## Tuesday, August 25th

- 5:00 p.m. — Youth Community Group
- 7:00 p.m. — decREAD Group

## Thursday, August 27th

- 7:00 p.m. — Buddhist Group

## Group discussion topics:

**Buddhist Group**—The UUFD Buddhist Group will be meeting at Terry Ankrom's house, 2480 West Main Street, Decatur, Illinois, 62522 on the second and fourth Thursday of each month. Further information? Call 217-428-1807 E-mail terry-ankrom@gmail.com

**Youth Group**—Youth Group meetings are every Tuesday from 5-6 pm at the UUFD. The 1st and 3rd Tuesdays are Science Group, and the 2nd and 4th are Community Group. All ages are welcome. For more information email Cassandra at meyen@peoplepc.com

**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. 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 and entitled "The Art of Presence." All are welcome and no prior knowledge of Tolle's teachings is required. Contact Mel Weinstein (763-0509) for additional information.

**The decREAD Group**—The decREAD Group will meet Tuesday, August 11 and Tuesday, August 25 at 7:00 PM at UUFD. We are reading William James' "The Varieties of Religious Experience." All are welcome.

**The Christian Practices Covenant Group**—The Christian Practices Covenant Group will not be meeting during the summer months and will resume in the Fall with the reading of "Jesus for the Non Religious" by Episcopal Bishop John Spong. Contact Joan Brown or Rev. Biedler if interested – guests are always welcome.

**The Wednesday Morning Covenant Group**—The Wednesday Morning Covenant Group meets the first and third Wednesdays of the month, which will be August 5th and 19th, from 10 a.m. to noon. Please join the group as it reads and discusses the book "Living Buddha, Living Christ" by Vietnamese monk Thich Nhat Hanh. We always welcome guests, setting out an empty chair for anyone who would like to visit.

**The Women's Book Club**—The Women's Book Club will meet on Wednesday, August 12 at 6 pm at Lorelei Zaker's home to discuss The House at Riverton by Kate Morton. Please bring a dish to share. RSVP to Lorelei at lorcza@comcast.net or 330-6761.

**Humanist Group**—The Humanist group meets the first Wednesday of each month. All meetings begin at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Decatur at 7:00 p.m.

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## Letters from John...

As many of you know, I have announced my plans to retire at the end of June, 2010, which means Gwen and I will be relocating and leaving beloved Decatur. Our plans are to move to the Pacific Northwest, specifically Lopez Island of the San Juans just north of Seattle. Why there? You may remember, Lopez Island was where Gwen and I were married on July 3, 2002. But more important at this moment in our lives, Gwen's parents and brother live just across the Canadian border in Kelowna, British Columbia, and her twin sister lives in nearby Vancouver. With Gwen's father now 89 and frail, this will mean an opportunity for Gwen to be near all of them. In addition, Gwen's two sons live on the west coast in the San Diego area.

As for my family, I have a sister and her husband who live on Lopez Island with plenty of room on their 5 acres. I have nephews, nieces and their families also in the PNW, so it is a move Gwen and I have long thought about making.

Why now? Well, we will have lived in Decatur for just over eight years. I gave my first sermon here in August of 2000, so it will be nearly 10 years that I will have served this Fellowship. Though I know UU ministries sometimes last longer than that, I think 10 years and my age of 62 are indicators that it's a good time to step into some new possibilities. What might those be?

I plan to continue as a UU minister, speaking and leading Enneagram workshops to the many dozens of UU congregations in the area. Who knows, Gwen and I may finally be able to do what we've talked about doing for years now...open a bed and breakfast. And Lopez Island would be perfect – it is beautiful, doesn't get a lot of snow, and is ideal for people who want to truly relax and explore nature, go sailing, whale watching, kayaking, hiking, mountain climbing, and even snow skiing, all within short drives.

But June 2010 is a loong way off – we still have much work to do as congregation. We have ideas yet to explore, guest speakers to invite, new members to welcome, RE classes to conduct and great potlucks yet to enjoy. So let's not think we're about to say our Goodbye's. We've got much yet to do together – and Gwen and I love being here. Let's make this the best year of UUFDF's life – why not?

So though it may be difficult, we know that change is inevitable, and of course necessary. In the coming year I will be proposing various adult religious education topics to the congregation to get your feedback. I will continue to work for Dove and maintain a high profile within this community. Wayne Kent has promised to invite me on his WSOY radio program again, and I plan to submit Herald and Review letters to the editor on issues of importance. As sermon topics come to mind that you would like me to speak on, I hope you will drop me an email, call or leave a note on my desk. I'm always open to listening I think you know by now, so please don't hold back.

I'll be supporting our children's RE program in every way I can and will be working to expand our membership numbers, all the while seeking diversity and inclusivity in those who want to join our religious community.

I'm very enthusiastic about UUFDF and will strive to build, grow and strengthen this wonderful congregation. All the while knowing it takes all of us to do that, so I will be calling on you individually and collectively to come along and build a lasting and vibrant Fellowship.

In Faith,

John

## Calculating Your Carbon Footprint

Submitted by the UUFDF Green Sanctuary Committee

Every choice we make contributes to the health of the planet--for better or for worse. Know that even a small reduction in our consumption of natural products can make the difference between what's lost and what's saved.

If you have already begun to reduce your carbon emissions, and you'd like to know more about offsetting more, please go to this website and use their Carbon Calculator to find out if your contribution is saving the critical forests of Mother Earth. It's beautifully done!

[http://www.conservation.org/act/live\\_green/carboncalc/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.conservation.org/act/live_green/carboncalc/Pages/default.aspx)

## UUFDF Field Trip to Peoria Chiefs Game Was a Blast

By Tim Rooney

On Wednesday evening, July 22, the Ray Rooney SUV pulled out of the UUFDF parking lot for the field trip to Peoria to catch the 7:00 game. The Peoria Chiefs (Chicago Cubs Class A affiliate) were playing the Lansing Lugnuts (Toronto Bluejays Class A affiliate). The ride was quite comfortable for the four attending the game, Tim Rooney, Julie Pajer, Bill Harbeck, and Ray Rooney. The ride up to the game was a great opportunity for everyone to "meet" Bill. We were full of questions, and he was full of answers.

Bill shared his youth experiences with us, including his basketball aspirations. Growing up in Valparaiso, Indiana, Bill didn't have much choice but to love and adore basketball. That's part of growing up in Indiana! We also learned of his wrestling accolades in high school. Bill then shared some of his college experiences with us. His time at the university was interrupted by the Army, though. Bill enlisted, but he was able to avoid the conflict in Vietnam. His methods to ensure a good stationing outside the country of Vietnam were ingenious, and it worked quite well for him! Bill was able to serve as a reverend in Panama for his time in the Army. In addition to this role, he started his coaching career in Panama. He helped coach track at the high school for all the families of the servicemen.

Upon completion of his tour, Bill returned to finish his college education. He was lucky enough to have access to one of the premier exercise scientists of the time, and Bill earned a graduate degree in exercise physiology. Not to focus on only one area, Bill also studied a bit of history.

Once at the game, we watched the Peoria Chiefs struggle the entire time. It was an exciting game for the Lugnuts, though! The perfect game was broken up in the bottom of the 5th inning with a double by the Chiefs' Jovan Rosa. This spoiled the no hitter for Lansing as well, but Peoria couldn't bring any runs across the plate. That changed in the bottom of the sixth when Andrew Rundle of the Chiefs homered with a man on first. That was all the scoring for the Chiefs, and the home team lost 6 - 2.

The stadium emptied quickly after the loss, and we enjoyed the ride home with more conversation between Bill and Ray.

We made it back to the UUFDF parking lot by 10:45 that night. It made for a long evening, but everyone enjoyed the trip. We learned quite a bit about our fellow UUFDF members, and a great time was had by all. How much fun? Enough fun that I'd like to have another baseball trip, possibly to St. Louis, if there is enough interest. Let me know what you think ([timothysrooney@hotmail.com](mailto:timothysrooney@hotmail.com)), and I'll try to put something together for late August or early September!



# Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Decatur

August 2009 Issue

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And tolerance in religion”

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## 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.



## August Birthdays

Rosemary Idleman	August 05
Lois Worley	August 20
Vern Thistlethwaite	August 21
John Biedler	August 21



### For

### Contact

### At:

Name Tags	Kathy Kline
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