

JANUARY 2011



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Decatur

3773 N. MacArthur Road
Decatur, IL 62526
Phone: (217) 875-5442
<http://www.uufd.org/>

Upcoming Services

All Sunday services begin at 10:15 AM.

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

January 02: "Hooray for Failure!" - Dick Zaker

This is a sermon for all of you who have read all those books on how to be a success, and for all of you who haven't read them, but know deep down in your hearts that it is some sort of failing that you have not. This is a sermon about how it is perfectly all right to be incompetent for hours on end.

January 09: "Are You a UU?" - Linda Berez

Even those of us who have been Unitarian Universalists for some-time find the question a difficult one to answer. We may be tempted to say what we're not because explaining Unitarian Universalism is complex, a reflection of our very lives. Regardless of whether you've attended one Sunday worship service or 100, once you find a UU community, you may feel like you've finally found a religious home. So are you a UU? Come explore together.

January 16: "Injustice for All" - Eric Devore

A layman's overview of our flawed justice system. Can we fix it? Do you care?

January 23: "There is Hope" - Linda Berez

The message of hope can be powerful for many. How or where do you find hope, especially during uncertain and fearful times? Is it something so intangible that it provides no help at all? Or, is hope so strong that helps you to overcome the most trying of situations?

January 30: "Media Matters: Delivering the UU message" - Bill Faber

Media matters for UUs and for liberal religion in general. We stand vastly out numbered in the media arena. Those who believe that reason alone carries the message are woefully mistaken - as history teaches. I will show how UUs can become media savvy and how UUs can harness the power of the local media.

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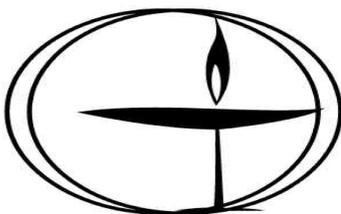
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Board Members at Large:

Carolyn Devore
Tracy Zieber

UUFD Trust Board:

Ken Robertson
Vern Thistlethwaite
Dave Snoeyenbos



Next Newsletter deadline: January 15, 2011

January 2011 Calendar of Events

All activities take place at the Fellowship, unless otherwise noted. Visitors are always welcome!

Wednesday, January 5

- 7:00 p.m. — Humanist Discussion Group

Friday, January 7

- 1:00 p.m. — Men's Luncheon at Tuscany

Tuesday, January 10

- 7:00 p.m. — decREAD Group

Wednesday, January 12

- 7:00 p.m. — Spiritual Journey Covenant Group

Friday, January 14

- 1:00 p.m. — Men's Luncheon at Tuscany

Wednesday, January 19

- 6:30 p.m. — Decatur Vegetarian Society

Friday, January 21

- 1:00 p.m. — Men's Luncheon at Tuscany

Tuesday, January 25

- 7:00 p.m. — decREAD Group

Wednesday, January 26

- 7:00 p.m. — Spiritual Journey Covenant Group

Friday, January 28

- 1:00 p.m. — Men's Luncheon at Tuscany

Group discussion topics:

Eckhart Tolle Discussion Group—Typically, the Eckhart Tolle Discussion Group seeks to explore the teachings and spiritual philosophy of Eckhart Tolle, a contemporary mystic, through discussions, audio-visual presentations, and silent meditations. The group customarily met at the UUFd. Now, the group will meet at another location. Anyone interested in joining this group should contact Mel Weinstein at 763-0509 for additional information.

The decREAD Group—The decREAD Group will meet on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month at 7:00 p.m. at UUFd. All are welcome. "Everything Must Change: When the World's Biggest Problems and Jesus' Good News Collide" by Brian McLaren.

Humanist Group—The Humanist Discussion Group meets at 7:00 pm on the first Wednesday of the month. For more information, contact Dave at 865-2409.

Spiritual Journey Covenant Group—The Spiritual Journey Covenant Group meets the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month at UUFd from 7:00-8:30. For further information contact Ron Shafer at ron.shafer52@gmail.com or 865-2527.

Decatur Vegetarian Society (DVS) --- The DVS group meets the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 6:30 pm. for a vegetarian potluck dinner, followed by a live or video presentation at 8:00 pm. The meetings are open to the public. If you interested in participating in a potluck, please either (1) bring a vegetarian or vegan dish with a list of ingredients or (2) donate \$5. Also, you should bring your own eating utensils. Contact Mel Weinstein (763-0509) for additional information.

UUFd Men's Group- This group meets every Friday at Tuscany at 1:00 for lunch and conversation.

Please bring a donation of nonperishable food items to be taken to our local food banks.

LETTER FROM LINDA

Greetings,

Happy New Year! January marks the beginning of my fifth month here with you as your consulting minister. Getting to know you and Decatur during these past four months has been wonderful. I've appreciated your warmth and hospitality.

At this time of the year when we look back and look forward, it's easy to really see how time flies and also to consider how our lives are relatively short. Being mindful of how we spend our time on this earth is important. Finding ways to take time each day to give thanks for our life and the people who surround us brings meaning.

The New Year also gives an opportunity to start with a clean slate in some sense. Resolutions come out of a desire to start anew to change habits and to begin again. Spending time with family and friends, losing weight, exercising, quitting smoking or drinking, learning something new, organizing your home or office, all speak to the desire to better our lives and ourselves. I also believe that a part of being a better you may also start with even simpler things. Things like thanking people for the service they provide at a store or in a restaurant. What about offering one's place in line, to someone who seems stressed? Or you might donate money or items to charitable organizations. Refraining from speaking ill of someone or taking time to listen and hear their story may lead to a deepening in a relationship. There are many things that a fresh start and the New Year can bring. I'd be interested in hearing some of your thoughts and ideas on this.

I'd like to offer you another resolution idea for this year. Bring a friend on a Sunday morning. What would the impact be if every person resolved to bring one or more friends at least once this year? It's a well-known fact in Unitarian Universalist circles that most of us come for the first time because a friend invited us to attend with them. Think about what brought you to the Fellowship for the first time. Was it a friend or a co-worker? It was for me.

Something else to consider for the New Year is a four-week class entitled "Coming to Terms." Ron Shafer and I will be offering this class which will begin Thursday January 20 at 7 p.m. Look for more information later in this newsletter.

In the hymn Spirit of Life one line reads, "roots hold me close, wings set me free." Finding ways to feel more connected to the earth, to others and to feel more grounded will in turn help you to soar higher. How will you resolve this year to soar higher?

Happy New Year! Stay safe and take care.

Linda

Rev. Linda Berez

Consulting Minister

Cell Phone - 414-460-2922

Email – minister@uufd.org

January Office Hours: Wednesday 5, 19, 26 – 12:30 pm – 2:30 pm

Friday 7, 21, 28 – 10:30 am – 12:30 pm

Green Sanctuary Committee

Seeing Green

by Deonne Orvis

I thought I was a reasonably well informed environmentalist until Mel Weinstein, GSC member in charge of our film festival, handed out the ballot—an eleven page list of films from which we were to select five—for our film series. What a mass of information! What a variety of formats! How to select a balance between discomfiting information, entertaining humor, and inspiring action?

Looking at all the film bios I had to exclude, some major themes began to emerge. Thinking and acting in terms of systems was at the center of many of the problems. Focusing on individual response seemed to be the other important message.

System: Weather/Climate change

Actions: Reduce petroleum produce use. Support policies that help those in poorer countries deal with climate change effects. Support and use new technologies that reduce climate change inputs. Be open to understanding and sharing how our behaviors impact global ecosystems.

System: Soil

Actions: Learn about the complexities of the soil ecosystem. Be a conscious load consumer. Continue to study and act for restructuring our food system.

System: Water – the oceans, rivers, wetlands

Actions: Change our consumption patters to restore fish populations. Demand a review of U. S. and international policies and laws on water rights. Work for reform of unjust activities and proactive policies for the future.

System: Pollution of soil and water systems

Actions: Reduce human “addiction” to plastic, natural gas, lawns, and garbage generating lifestyles.

System: Wildlife habitat—local, national, and international

Actions: Work for sustainable, fair wildlife policy in Decatur's Sustainable Future Plan. Support organizations working for international wildlife rights.

System: Living design

Actions: Become informed and use green technology in architecture and community planning.

Come join us at the Environmental Film Festival later this year for more adrenaline boosting information and actionable ideas!

Leadership Opportunities at the UUFD

With the new year upon us, maybe you've already given up on that resolution? Perhaps you're seeking something a bit less ambitious than those lofty goals you had imagined in December? The UUFD is a great place to begin exploring opportunities to add your time and talents!

The first position is to provide an interface for the UUFD to the rest of the world. Don't be intimidated by the profound appearance of this opportunity, though! The Newsletter editor position will let someone demonstrate artistic talent and explore creative potential. This responsibility has no term. If you are interested in graphic design, computers, literature, or publishing, please send an e-mail to president@uufd.org to express interest. Although some interest has been shown in this position, a permanent replacement has not committed to this role. And even if the interested party does take over as editor, any assistance is always appreciated.

What else might you do? Maybe you're particularly friendly or hospitable? Consider joining the Hospitality Committee! What about leading this group? Thankfully, Jane Brooks was kind enough to volunteer her time and efforts to lead this committee. Jane might not always be able to coordinate everything, though, so she'll appreciate any assistance someone might like to offer. Contact Jane for more information to see how you can make a difference in the Hospitality Committee!

“Coming to Terms” Class at UUFD

“Coming to Terms” a four week class led by Ron Shafer and the Rev. Linda Berez. Thursdays, January 20, 27, February 3, 10 at 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. at the Fellowship. All are welcome to attend. This class is a chance to explore your spiritual past and present in a safe and friendly environment. Meet and discuss with others what it was like for you to leave behind Christianity, Judaism or some other religious tradition of your past. Consider what UUFD might offer or has offered to you. Sign-ups are encouraged so we can contact you in the case of inclement weather. Please contact Linda via email at minister@uufd.org or by phone 414-460-2922 or Ron by phone at 865-2527.

From the desk of the Newsletter Editor

As a reminder, newsletter articles are due by the 15th of each month and should be sent to newsletter@uufd.org

If you have an announcement pertinent to the members of the congregation during the month and would like to have it sent out via email, you may also send this information to newsletter@uufd.org

Please sign up to bring snacks on Sundays. The sign up sheet is in the lobby. We have many openings and it is greatly appreciated!

Be My Valentine Pal

Here's your chance to connect to our bright RE Kids on a fun level. The Religious Education Committee is looking for some adults who want RE children to be their "Secret Valentine Pals" for a month.

On Sundays -- January 16, January 23, January 30, and February 6 -- your "Secret Valentine Pal" will get a note, small gift, etc., to you at UUFD. Then on Sunday, February 13, you can attend a special Valentine event during RE to meet your Secret Pal.

It'll be a ball. Just contact Lorelei Zaker at LorCZa@comcast.net or 330-6761 to get your Secret Pal. We have a limited number of kids to go around!

Have a heart -- help our kids!

Soup Lunch Sunday, January 23 at the UUFD

Sunday, January 23, following the Service, the UUFD will offer a Soup Lunch hosted by the RE Children, the RE Committee, and Friends. What will we be serving? Various kinds of soup (including vegetarian) as well as dessert. You'd never know the meal was finished if it weren't for dessert!



For only a \$5.00 donation, you can enjoy the delicious treats of scrumptious soup prepared by your UUFD compatriots. The money will be used to buy items for children in Haiti—The items will be brought to the Haitian children in March. If you would like to be a friend and help out, please contact Dick or Lorelei Zaker at LorCZa@comcast.net or call 330-6761.

RE Schedule for January

January 2 Kwanzaa: Taught by Lorelei Zaker.

January 9 Snowflakes: Each one unique -- just like people! Taught by Jennifer Sekosky.

January 16 Children in Haiti: Why and how we are doing the fund-raiser next week. Taught by Lorelei Zaker.

January 23: Set up for soup lunch fund-raiser

January 30: Making valentines for Secret Valentine Pals and people in Armed Forces



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of
 Janaury 2011 Issue
 "Promoting freedom, reason,



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.



January Birthdays

Denise Lohrenz-Renfro	January 06
Laura Vaught	January 06
Jasmyn Zaker	January 08
Mark Sorensen	January 20
Caius Pajer	January 21
Hadrian Pajer	January 21
Amy Stockwell	January 22



Minister Reverend Linda Berez (minister@uufd.org)
President Mr. Timothy Rooney (president@uufd.org)
Vice-President Mrs. Judy Thistlethwaite (vicepresident@uufd.org)
Treasurer Mr. Mark Sorenson (treasurer@uufd.org)
Secretary Ms. Mary C. Lovell (secretary@uufd.org)
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