

February 2011



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

Upcoming Services

All Sunday services begin at 10:15 AM.

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

Rev. Linda Berez
Consulting Minister

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

President:
Timothy Rooney

Vice President:
Judy Thistlethwaite

Treasurer:
Mark Sorensen

Secretary:
Mary Lovell

Board Members at
Large:
Carolyn Devore
Tracy Zieber

UUFD Trust Board:
Ken Robertson
Vern Thistlethwaite
Dave Snoeyenbos

Feb 6: "War and Peace" - Rev. Linda Berez

As Unitarian Universalists we affirm and promote the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all. What does this mean to Unitarian Universalists in the United States today while the country is engaged in war? Is peace possible? Come hear former Air Force Airman Rev. Linda Berez reflect upon the challenges of our time.

Feb 13: "Love Thy Neighbor" by Rev. Linda Berez

The second principle of our Unitarian Universalist Association is to affirm justice, equity and compassion in human relations. One way people across the country live out this principle is by participating in the "Standing on the Side of Love" campaign. Join us this Sunday to learn more about how standing with others who face oppression is about standing together on the side of love.

There will be short congregational meeting at 11:30.

Feb 20: "Ethical Eating in the Matrix of Learning" by Paul Kent Oakley.

Paul is a student minister at the Carbondale Unitarian Fellowship and a second year seminarian at Meadville Lombard Theological School.

Feb 27: "Left Turns We Never See Coming--Navigating the Unexpected" by Anne Griffiths

In the midst of a long, cold winter, and in a world that can sometimes feel quite broken, how do we continue to not only survive but thrive? How do we find the strength, courage, and spirit necessary to navigate our lives? Come join Ms. Griffiths, a Unitarian Universalist seminary graduate, as she explores themes of humanity, strength, and abundance



Next Newsletter Deadline: February 15, 2011

February 2011 Calendar of Events

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

Wednesday, February 2
7:00 p.m. — Humanist Discussion Group

Thursday, February 3
7:00— Coming to Terms Class

Friday, February 4
1:00 p.m. — Men's Luncheon at Tuscany

Tuesday, February 8
7:00 p.m. — decREAD Group

Wednesday, February 9
7:00 p.m. — Spiritual Journey Covenant Group

Wednesday, February 9
6:30 p.m.—Womens Book Group

Thursday, February 10
7:00 p.m.— Coming to Terms Class

Friday, February 11
1:00 p.m. — Men's Luncheon at Tuscany

Saturday, February 12
6:00 p.m.—Fellowship Dinner; location to be announced

Wednesday, February 16
6:30 p.m. — Decatur Vegetarian Society

Friday, February 18
1:00 p.m. — Men's Luncheon at Tuscany

Tuesday, February 22
7:00 p.m. — decREAD Group

Wednesday, February 23
7:00 p.m. — Spiritual Journey Covenant Group

Friday, February 25
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 (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—Humanist Discussion Group meets 7:00 pm on the first Wednesday of the month. Contact Dave 865 2409

Women's Book Group—This month the group will meet at the home of Vicky Harbeck for potluck and discussion of the book "The Art of Racing in the Rain".

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 ronaldshafer52@yahoo.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 Mens Group- This group meets every Friday at Tuscany at 1:00 for lunch and Conversation.

LETTER FROM LINDA

Greetings,

Recently I was returning from California. Air travel these days, even with all of the concerns and hassles, still provides a safe and fast way to get from one part of the country to another. I noticed looking out my window to the left beyond the wingtip a land that seemed so peaceful. The quiet of the cabin added to that feeling. A man next me was playing Scrabble on his smart phone. Across the aisle a young baby was cuddled with his mother. Another person was reading a paper. The din of society was far below us.

I found myself thinking about and appreciating the Buddhist practice of meditation. I began to wonder what it would be like if the people of our country and/or the world could make time each to day to stop, to be quiet, to breathe, to give thanks for life, and reconnect to the grandeur of our world.

I remember hearing Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hanh speak a few years ago on what he believed would bring world peace. He teaches a practice of following one's breath. Breathing in, breathing out, focusing on each breath helps one ground oneself in the present moment. He said that if the leaders of the world would breathe together, be present in the here and now, world peace might be possible.

Would it work? I don't know but following the breath as Thich Nhat Hanh says, helps me feel better, helps me feel grounded. I invite you to try it for 20 minutes or for just a few moments. Breathe in, saying to yourself, "I'm breathing in." Breathe out, "I'm breathing out." In breath, out breath. How does it make you feel?

I'll be finishing up my sermon series on our Unitarian Universalist Principles this month. More information on these may be found on the first page of this newsletter.

If you'd still like to join the class "Coming to Terms" that Ron Shafer and I are leading we have two more classes on February 3, 10 from 7-8:30pm, please feel free to join us. This is a class that helps you explore your spiritual past and present and what it means to be a Unitarian Universalist.

Finally, I don't think I'm holding anything back by telling you that I hope the groundhog doesn't see his shadow this year and that Spring comes early. Pitchers and catchers are due in Arizona and Florida soon. Can Spring be far away?

May the days of February be healthy, happy and safe. Remember to breathe. Take care.

Linda

Rev. Linda Berez

Consulting Minister

Cell Phone - 414-460-2922

Email – minister@uufd.org

February Office Hours: Wednesday 2, 4 – 12:30 pm – 2:30 pm

Presidents Message

Greetings UUFDF Members and Friends,

I'm back!! And with me comes the love that February and Valentine's Day brings. Now, if only that love could warm the air and bring spring a few weeks sooner! Until March arrives, though, we'll have to warm ourselves with the love, caring, and affection of our family, friends and Fellowship compatriots.

The message this month is possible thanks to the love and caring effort of Terry Ankrom and Kathy Kline. These two have long been involved at the UUFDF, and they are continuing to take a greater, significant role at the Fellowship. Where to begin with all their contributions?

When I started attending the UUFDF, I had a great interest in Buddhism. Lo and behold, who was hosting a Buddhist discussion group at his house? Terry Ankrom, of course! I quickly joined this group and picked up the book that everyone was discussing. It was a great group and it was wonderful to see and hear how people were acting on the Buddhist philosophy we were discussing each week.

Terry's wife, Kathy Kline, wasn't able to participate in the Buddhist group because of her job at the Decatur Public Library, but has been involved with other activities at UUFDF; including the Green Sanctuary Committee, Drumming Circle, and CUUPS.

The most recent activity that has been added to the Ankrom-Kline list is the UUFDF newsletter! Since our previous editor's departure, I had to resume editing the UUFDF newsletter. How long would that last? Thanks to Terry and Kathy, I only had to worry about editing the newsletter for one month. What's more, Terry and Kathy seem to be following in a new tradition established by the previous editor...editorS! Our last newsletter editor was also a husband-wife combination. This duplication in newsletter editing is by no means a requirement, but having an extra pair of eyes to look over the newsletter is always helpful.

Perhaps more valuable than the extra pair of eyes to review, though, is the infusion of new, great ideas that an extra mind can bring to the editing process. I know that the first time I left the position of newsletter editor, the UUFDF monthly publication was quickly full of graphics and busy with colors and fonts.

What new changes will the newsletter see from the ideas, visions, and plans of Terry and Kathy? I know that Tracy Zieber has started a new column, the Caring and Sharing section. What might this addition bring to the newsletter? A focus on activities that can happen at the UUFDF? Maybe a kids' project done during Sunday service? Perhaps meeting some of the troops that get cards from the kids? This new addition will be a great feature to see who and what from the UUFDF are making contributions to the Decatur community.

With February just days away, I encourage everyone to share some of your love with family, friends, and UUFDF activities. Hopefully the bustling participation of Terry, Kathy, and Tracy can inspire friends and members of the UUFDF to contribute a bit of your time and love to one of the many activities held or sponsored by the UUFDF.

Let's make it happen!

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

Tim Rooney

GREEN SANCTUARY COMMITTEE

Seeing GREEN by Deonne Orvis

Here come those delicious “drippy days” of February when everything is melting and spring seems about to burst out of hiding. But before you get growing in your greenhouse or under your grow lamp, give your garden a winter check up. The best time to really see the strengths and needs of a property is when only the skeleton—the basic architectural elements are showing.

Arm yourself with that basic tool of design power—the clip board, and take a grand tour. Does your entrance say what you want it to say to arriving visitors? Is there an accent tree of special fruit, color or beauty welcoming guests near the front door? Do your fences and gates lead in a logical flowing manner around the property? Do they go somewhere (tool shed, back gate, vegetable and flower gardens, compost yard) and not just end with no “focal point”?

Thinking of focal points; go back inside and check the view from every window and door of the house. Are there framed views, some short, and some long lines from within, or ugly vistas that need sprucing up? The view from the kitchen window and that from the living room or patio that blend into the outdoors are two of the most important for framing, closure and decorative focal points at the terminal end. The views need to be in complimentary scale to the house and property.

Select from the cover story of our zone if you have plenty of space. Oak, maple, Norway spruce, white pine, etc. Fill in an under story from the crabapple, dogwood and cherry families and bring in some native plants for ground cover. There are many textures pleasing to live with, besides lawn. You can save time and energy by designing a plan that eliminates mowing.

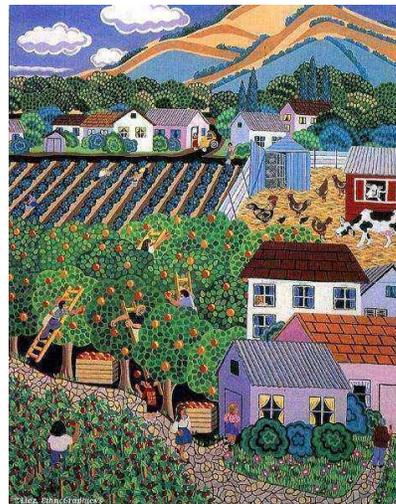
To complete your energy conservation plan, be sure you have evergreens on the north and west sides of your property; and shade or filtering trees on the east and south. A little nut grove and an orchard of dwarf or semi-dwarf trees offers food with less work than a vegetable garden. You can always trade fruit and nuts for veggies!

Don't forget some water for the birds. Dripping or fountain is best, as moving water discourages freezing.

My absolute favorite catalog for winter hardy plans and all food crops is:

Miller Nurseries, 5060 West Lake Road, Canadagua, New York, 14424-8904, 1-800-836-9630

www.millernurseries.com



Decatur Vegetarian Society Meeting Feb. 16

The group will meet for a potluck at 6:30 p.m., and the video “Mental Fitness 101” by John Pierre at 8 p.m. In this informal classroom presentation, John Pierre, Nutrition and Fitness Consultant, suggests a variety of brain strengthening exercises to keep the brain healthy as we age.

Vote on February 13

The UUFD Board voted to call a special (short) Congregational meeting Feb. 13 following the regular morning service at 11:30 to vote on recommended changes in the UUFD Constitution. The changes are underlined in the text that follows. The current wording is in parenthesis.

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Decatur

PROPOSED CHANGES FOR THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP OF DECATUR

January 5, 2011

Section 4. CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

The annual congregational meeting shall be held each year not later than the last Sunday in (April) May at such time and place as shall be fixed by the BOARD. The purpose of the annual meeting shall be to elect officers and trustees, adopt the budget for the following fiscal year and to hear officers', ministers' and committees' reports and other actions deemed necessary by the BOARD.

Section 7. ELECTIONS

All offices, unless otherwise noted, shall have a one-year term. Only the secretary, treasurer and officers of the TRUST may succeed themselves in office.

Board Members at Large shall be elected for two (2) year terms. When possible, terms shall be staggered so that at least one Board Member at Large is elected each year.

The President shall appoint a nominating committee of at least three (3) members not later than the second Sunday in (March) April of each year. This committee shall report its nominations for Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, Board Member at Large, and TRUSTEE when appropriate, at a meeting of the FELLOWSHIP immediately following the regular Sunday service (on the second Sunday in April) two Sundays before the election. Further nominations may be made from the floor either at that meeting or at the meeting at which the election takes place.

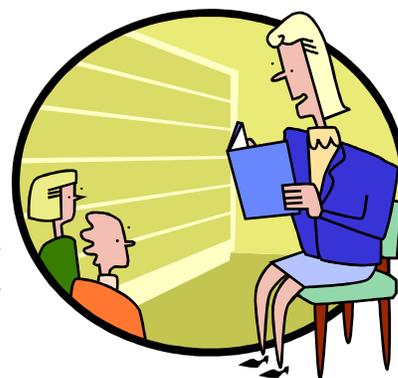
Elections will be held (on the last Sunday in April) not later than the last Sunday in May.

Terms of each office shall commence with the first Sunday (of May) after the election takes place.

NEWS FROM RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Thank you for the books!

The Green Sanctuary Committee was kind enough to donate quite a few new books to Religious Education recently. They are fantastic choices about caring for the environment, and the kids love them. Thank you to the committee for thinking of RE.



Interested in teaching?

If you are interested in teaching an RE class, please contact Linda Shroyer at 429-7776 or linda.shroyer@att.net. Lorelei has lesson plans for the sources of our UU faith, so we will be focusing on those this Spring and you can teach from her lesson plans. There are also a lot of holidays in the next few months OR you could even teach about the topic of your choice. Please consider this your welcome to join us!

February schedule

February 6 – Make & decorate Valentine's Day cookies

February 13 – Valentine's Day party and craft

February 20 – Source #1 with Lorelei

February 27 – Source #2 with Jennifer

Looking ahead to March: Sources 3 & 4, St. Patrick's Day and Vernal Equinox

Fellowship Dinners



Be sure to sign up for the first Fellowship Dinner in 2011. It is scheduled for February 12. There is a sign-up sheet in the entry, for anyone interested in attending, or in hosting a dinner. Come and enjoy an evening of food and fellowship at 6:00 p.m., February 12.

Caring and Sharing



"Greeting cards have all been sent..."

By Tracy Zieber

So the old song goes.

By now most people have put away their recently acquired holiday cards. One group of people who probably have not are those serving in the military. Greeting cards, especially those received around the holidays, are dearly treasured by the military personnel who are often so very far from beloved home, family and friends. Greeting cards, by their very name and nature, convey simple greetings, but a heartfelt written message or a handmade card can convey so much more.

In December, when the UUFD kids took up their crayons to make cards for some of the men and women serving in our military, they set out to say more than just a simple "Happy Holidays". When Jasmyn, Owen and Grace drew and decorated holiday trees on their cards they were saying more than "Merry Christmas"; they were taking the time to choose just the perfect colors; they were thinking about shapes and symbols and those things that make the holidays bright, and then they drew them on their cards in order to share them with the soldiers. Hunter wrote his name and used stickers to express and share his excitement over the holidays; and Jack drew a brave soldier decked out in camouflage to honor the brave troops.

Greetings don't have to begin and end with the end-of-the-year holidays, though. There are many people who would appreciate a greeting card, a phone call, a lunch date, or even just a hand shake and a friendly smile. There are so many things that can be done to make a positive difference in someone's life if you are just willing to reach out and care.

Ask our UUFD kids about it. They know how!



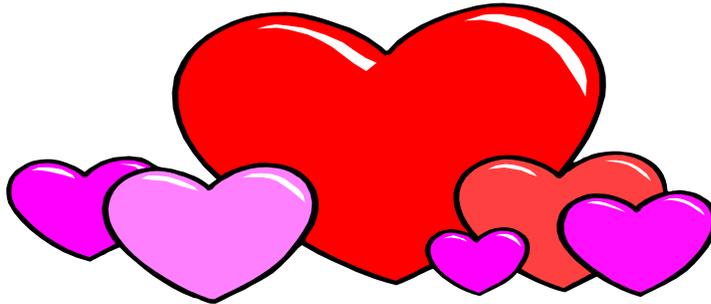
Coming to Terms

"Coming to Terms" class led by Ron Shafer and the Rev. Linda Berez. Continues on Thursdays, February 3, 10 at 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. at the Fellowship. All are welcome to attend the remaining two classes. 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

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Decatur

February 2011 Issue

“Promoting freedom, reason, and tolerance in religion”



Fellowship mission

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.



February Birthdays

Athena Pajer February 5



minister@uufd.org (Rev. Linda Berez)
president@uufd.org (Timothy Rooney)
vicepresident@uufd.org (Judy Thistlethwaithe)
treasurer@uufd.org (Mark Sorenson)
secretary@uufd.org (Mary C Lovell)
programs@uufd.org (Judy Thistlethwaithe)