

June 2011

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship



Rev. Linda Berez
Consulting Minister

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

President:
JudyThistlethwaite

Vice President:
Marge Evans

Treasurer:
Mark Sorensen

Secretary:
Mary Lovell

Board Members at
Large:
Carolynn Devore
Mel Weinstein
Joyce Throneburg

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.

June 5: "Last Words" – Rev. Linda Berez

The Rev. Forrest Church said that the goal in life "is to live in such a way that our lives will prove worth dying for." Is your life worth dying for? And, if you had a chance to pen your last words as Church did, what would you want to share? Let's explore these questions together.

June 12: "Opening the Question Box" – Rev. Linda Berez

Rev. Berez will be providing her last worship service on this day. This will be the congregation's opportunity to ask her questions that maybe you wished she had addressed this year. You are invited to email questions beforehand to minister@uufd.org.

June 19: "Celebrating Dads" - Vern Thistlethwaite

June 26: "What's Happening In the Christian Church Today?"

Miley Palmer

Taking a look at some of the trends happening in Christianity: globalization, a movement away from tradition, and a renewed engagement with science.

Next newsletter deadline: June 15 to newsletter@uufd.org

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

Calendar of Events

Friday, June 3
1:00 p.m.—Men's Luncheon at Tuscany

Wednesday, June 8
7:00 p.m. — Spiritual Journey Covenant Group

Wednesday, June 8
6:30 p.m. — Women's Book Group

Friday, June 10
1:00 p.m.—Men's Luncheon at Tuscany

Tuesday, June 14
7:00 p.m.— decREAD Group

Wednesday, June 15
6:30 p.m. — Decatur Vegetarian Society

Friday, June 17
1:00 p.m. — Men's Luncheon at Tuscany

Wednesday, June 22
7:00 p.m.— Spiritual Journey Covenant Group

Friday, June 24
1:00 p.m. — Men's Luncheon at Tuscany Covenant Group

Tuesday, June 28
7:00 p.m. — decREAD Group

Group discussion topics:

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. Discussion of "The Case for God" by Karen Armstrong.

Humanist Group—Humanist Discussion Group will resume meeting in the fall. Contact Dave at 865-2409

Women's Book Group—This month the group will meet at the home of Heather Stoa for potluck and discussion of "Let the Great World Spin" by Colum McCann

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

Community Food Bank: Please bring a donation of nonperishable food items for our local food banks to Sunday services.

LETTER FROM LINDA

Greetings,

I know you have been wondering, and asking me these past few months, about my plans for the future. As you know my partner the Rev. Marcia Marino has been serving First Unitarian St. Louis as their interim minister while I've been serving here in Decatur. Marcia and I now know that we will be leaving the area. Although I can't tell you where we are going yet, since Marcia is still in contract negotiations for her next interim position, I can tell you that I will not be staying at UUFD. I am currently in search for my next position close to where Marcia will be serving. As soon as I can tell you more, I will.

What's next for UUFD? As you read this newsletter, the search is underway for another contract minister. The process is in the capable hands of Mark Sorensen and the rest of the search committee. I am confident that this current search process will bring you another minister. And once a new minister is identified, I know you will welcome him or her into your church home, as warmly as you welcomed me here.

A part of ending my contract with you on June 30th is that I will no longer be in contact with you either in person, by phone or email. This is a part of our Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association Guidelines to which all ministers have covenanted to use in our ministry. This is important because as you welcome your new minister, you will want to establish a healthy relationship with him or her. By not keeping in touch with me, you will have the opportunity to get to know your new minister and I will get to know the people in my new setting. If you have any questions or concerns, as always, I welcome the conversation. As a reminder, since General Assembly begins the week of June 20th, if you do want to schedule an appointment please contact me soon.

My final worship service with you is June 12th. For this service I will be "Opening the Question Box." This is your opportunity to ask me a question about Unitarian Universalism, religion, theology, ethics, or some other topic you would like to hear me expound upon. I encourage you to send your questions via email, mail them to me, or bring them to the Fellowship. I enjoy this service a great deal and always appreciate pondering the questions I receive.

One of the things that I have come to appreciate in life are the memories I make with friends, family and the people I get to know in the congregations I serve. I will look back always on my time here at UUFD and feel grateful that you provided me with an opportunity to serve you to share a part of my life with you. This has been a truly wonderful year. I have enjoyed being your minister.

Take care,
Linda
Rev. Linda Berez
Consulting Minister

Cell Phone - 414-460-2922
Email – minister@uufd.org
June Office Hours:
Wednesday 1, 8, 15 – 12:30 pm – 2:30 pm
Friday 3, 10 – 10:30 am – 12:30 pm

President's Message

Greeting UUFD members and Friends,

Our minister Rev. Linda Berez , has announced that she will not be in Decatur next year. We are very sorry to see her go, but thankful for the time she has spent with us. We really appreciate the classes she held, sermons she gave and counseling she did. Thank you so much for all you did in the short time you were here. We wish you the best for years to come.

Top priority is to find a new minister. Mark Sorensen is chairing the Search Committee. Let's hope for lots of applicants.

The program committee is being activated. If you have ideas for Sunday programs, let me know and I will pass the information to the committee.

Committees are now being put together. If you have a preference for a particular committee, let me know. We need volunteers for all areas of the Fellowship.

Thanks for all your help.

Judy Thistlethwaite

Flea Market Coming Soon!

UUFD will have a craft/flea market on Saturday, June 4 from 8-2 outside the fellowship.

Cost is \$20 for a space and \$25 for a limited number of tables.

For more information contact Kathy Vaught at 620-7644 or faithvaught@comcast.net.



Overview of the 2011 Environmental Film Series

The Green Sanctuary Committee put on another successful environmental film series (EFS) this spring. With sponsor support and donations, the events were self-sustaining, and there was money left over, after covering expenses, to contribute to the general operations of the Fellowship.

The series was initiated with a *Dirt! The Movie*, which was very popular with over 40 people in attendance. Also, this film was later shown to the board of a local organization, DIGG (Decatur Is Growing Gardeners), by a special request from Deonne Orvis. The *Age of Stupid* film showed us the potentially catastrophic consequences of ignoring major environmental warnings in the present. *America's Lost Landscape* provided a very interesting historical portrait of prairie grass, how it disappeared in a few short generations and current attempts to bring it back. *What's On Your Plate* followed the investigations of two inner-city, 11 year-old girls as they probed the sources of their food and learned about the political and social forces that affect the availability of healthy food in our society.

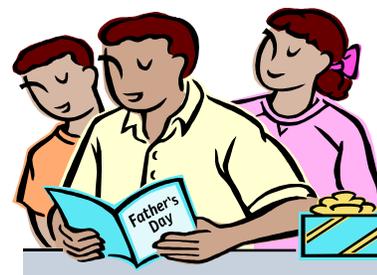
The films in the series were either rented or purchased. All films were accompanied by screening rights to show them to the public. Two of the films, *Dirt! The Movie* and *'Til the River Runs Clear*' will be donated to a local library.

We appreciate all the patrons of the series both from the Fellowship and the greater community. The films were very educational, generated stimulating discussion after the screenings, and got many people to think about their impacts on the environment and how individual behavior changes can make a difference. We were fortunate to have several patrons like Steve Johns and the Metzgers (Samara Farm CSA, Shelbyville) lead the after-film discussions.

Lastly, a big thank you to all the EFS volunteers who helped with the film series. Without their help and dedication, the film series could not happen. The staff included June Allison (greeter/sales/donations/popcorn-making instructor), Joan Brown (concessions), Chelso Frescura (setup/cleaning/greeter/indispensable helper), Marge Evans (concessions), Kathy Kline & Terry Ankrom (setup/concessions), Bill Harbeck (setup) and any others who I might have missed in this article. Most of these people also worked on the planning of the film series including selecting films.

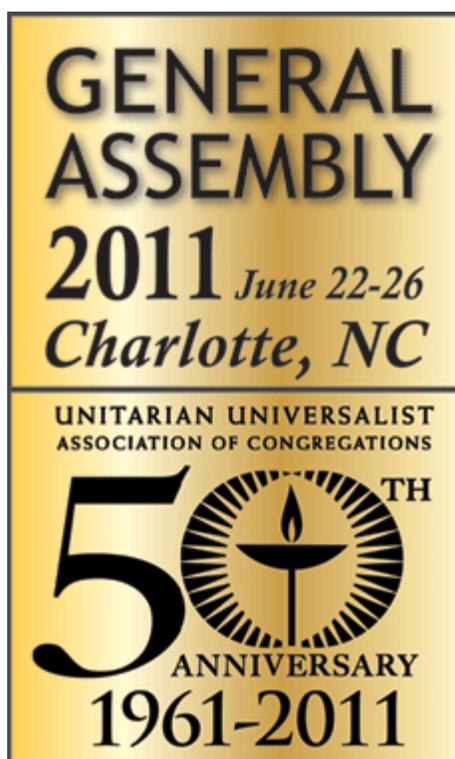
Mel Weinstein

NEWS FROM RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



Calendar for June:

- June 5 Memorial Day and Death — Lorelei Zaker
- June 12 Father's Day craft —Jennifer Sekosky
- June 19 Summer Solstice Celebration — Kathy Kline
- June 26 Character Theme #1 — Oliver Button



Humanism at the UUFDF

The Humanism group held our final meeting before summer break this month. As is customary, we met on the first Wednesday of the month. For May, this was Wednesday, May 04, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. at the UUFDF. What was discussed? Rita Schwake led us in a discussion of Humanism 101. The difficulty here was limiting resources, though! There's such an abundance of information available, Rita had to limit her time and depth on topic because there is just so much to cover and discuss.

Rita began with the formulation of modern Humanism as it is recognized today. This started in the early 1900's and is based on two concepts. First, human conclusions are guided by reason and second, human lives are guided by the love and respect for what surrounds us. Although this positive formulation represents what Humanism stands for, there are also some delineations of what Humanism is not. Humanism does not allow for supernatural entities and is a non-theistic belief system. Humanists maintain that gods are created by humans to fill a need.

At this point in the discussion, we delved deeper into the subtle differences between similar belief systems. We examined deism and the belief in a creator god that is subsequently uninvolved in the happenings of the universe. We also examined atheism to conclude this is not really a philosophy (as Humanism is considered) but rather just a statement of belief.

With these distinctions out of the way, Rita then presented the development of modern Humanism. Rita did concede that Humanism had its roots in ancient Greek philosophy, but Humanism was most fully developed in its modern form in the 1770's. From the work of philosophers of this time, Humanism was developed as a working philosophy. Humanism had no strict guidelines that were present in the religions of the day. Humanism had no rigid dogmas that were essential to many of the religions of the time. In short, Humanism didn't provide any "easy answers" but did provide the foundation to formulate answers to these difficult questions.

With so much of this history in place, the group began discussing Humanism as it relates today. For instance, we examined the Humanist Manifesto and some of what those documents imply. For instance, the Humanist Manifesto (1933) asserts that "humanism will affirm life rather than deny it." How would this apply to terrorism today? How does this apply to some of the oppressive governments of the middle east? How did America overcome the prejudices and repressive conventions that exist in so many parts of the world today? When and how did women's rights develop in America and how did Humanism affect this? What about things happening in China today? How can we affect these conditions, governments, and situations?

With this examination of the problems present in many of the religions and philosophies today, we examined how these issues could be resolved. Maybe if religions didn't get obsessed with details but instead emphasized goodness to people? How can we as Humanists encourage this? Perhaps just be as good a person as we can possibly be? Celebrate the traditional religious holidays for the sake of spreading joy, peace and merriment?

With the conclusion of the meeting, we didn't have any quick, easy answers. At least we had some ideas, though. All that remained was for each of us to go forth and celebrate the Humanist philosophy as evidenced by our actions in society and among our peers.

And wait... For what? For our next meeting! We'll resume the regular Humanism meetings when September arrives. What will we discuss? That's not decided yet, but if you'd like to join us or have an idea, let us know! We're always looking for some new ideas to discuss, and Wednesday, September 7, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. at the UUFDF is a great chance for you to join us in this discussion!

Tim Rooney

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Decatur

June 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.



Happy Birthday!

Adam Vaught	June 20
June Allison	June 29
Joan Brown	June 30



Want to see your name on the list?

Send name & birthday to: newsletter@uufd.org

minister@uufd.org (Rev. Linda Berez)
president@uufd.org (Judy Thistlethwaite)
vicepresident@uufd.org (Marge Evans)
treasurer@uufd.org (Mark Sorensen)
secretary@uufd.org (Mary C Lovell)
programs@uufd.org (Judy Thistlethwaite)

newsletter@uufd.org (Kathy Kline and Terry Ankrom)