



# Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

## Upcoming Services

All Sunday services begin at **10:15 AM.**

We offer religious education for children and child care for babies.

### **February 3 - The Noise Of Fear - Rev. Larry Hutchison**

What are we hearing amidst all the noise these days? From Kafka's "Burrow" to DeLillo's "White Noise", we will explore the sounds of fear. From the blaring news 24/7 to videos to traffic to apocalyptic sermons, we need some silence protection, a little blanket of security. Yes, there is too much fear in religion, also. Bertrand Russell wrote: to conquer fear is the beginning of wisdom. Let's begin....

### **February 10 - Quest For Love And Justice - Rev. Larry Hutchison & Mary Lovell**

We will visit the myth of Echo and Narcissus in Ovid's Metamorphosis. I don't believe the ancients told these stories to pass the time of day or to teach children a lesson or to tell you where the word echo came from. These stories are meditations, case studies: what do you see in them. Say, the pool is your pool, what do you see? the voice is your voice, what are you saying? It's a reflection and projection. This is fun stuff --

*Board Meeting at noon.*

### **February 17 - The Charter for Compassion—Opportunities for Dialogue and Action - Teena Zindle McWilliams**

A new initiative in Decatur centers on "The Charter for Compassion," a movement to address compassionate thought and compassionate action. While we realize that Decatur is a community that gives generously, are we as compassionate as individuals in our everyday actions?

### **February 24 - Beyond Religion - Mark Sorensen**

Based on His Holiness the Dalai Lama's latest book, BEYOND RELIGION: ETHICS FOR A WHOLE WORLD, Mark will explore the ideas presented therein. Although a Buddhist leader, the Dalai Lama makes an appeal "for what he calls a 'third way,' a path to an ethical and happy life and to a global human community based on understanding and mutual respect." The book states "that it is both possible and worthwhile to attempt a new secular approach to universal ethics." Mark is a long-time member of UUFD and his recent presentations include: "Let It Be a Dance," "Good Without God," and "Religious Literacy."

Rev. Larry Hutchison  
Consulting Minister

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Decatur, IL 62526  
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President:  
Marge Evans

Vice President:  
Rita Schwake

Past President:  
Judy Thistlethwaite

Treasurer:  
Mark Sorensen

Secretary:  
Barb Hannon

Board Members at  
Large:  
Mel Weinstein  
Mary Cleave  
Joyce Throneburg

UUFD Trust Board:  
Ken Robertson  
Vern Thistlethwaite  
Dave Snoeyenbos



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

## Calendar of Events

**Friday, February 1 - 1:00 p.m.**  
Men's Lunch at Benny's Grill

**Saturday, February 2 - 9:00 a.m.**  
NWEI discussion course "Hungry for Change"

**Wed., February 6 - 10:00 a.m.**  
Wednesday Morning Covenant Group

**Wed., February 6 - 7:00 p.m.**  
Humanist Discussion Group

**Friday, February 8 - 1:00 p.m.**  
Men's Lunch at Benny's Grill

**Saturday, February 9 - 9:00 a.m.**  
NWEI discussion course "Hungry for Change"

**Wed., February 13 - 6:00 p.m.**  
Women's Book Group

**Wed., February 13 - 7:00 p.m.**  
Spiritual Journey Covenant Group

**Friday, January 15 - 1:00 p.m.**  
Men's Luncheon at Benny's Grill

**Wed., February 20 - 10:00 a.m.**  
Wednesday Morning Covenant Group

**Wed., February 20 - 6:30 p.m.**  
Decatur Vegetarian Society

**Friday, February 22 - 1:00 p.m.**  
Men's Luncheon at Benny's Grill

**Wed., February 27 - 7:00 p.m.**  
Spiritual Journey Covenant Group

**Humanist Group**—Humanist Discussion Group - Meets on the first Wednesday of the month. Contact Dave Snoeyenbos at 865-2409.

**Women's Book Group**— The Women's Book Club will meet on Wednesday, February 13 at 6 p.m. at Vicky Harbeck's home. The book is *The Secret Diaries of Charlotte Bronte*, by Syrie James

**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 p.m. for a vegetarian potluck dinner, followed by a live or video presentation at 8:00 p.m. 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.

**Wednesday Morning Covenant Group** - This group meets the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 12 noon. We are discussing Eboo Patel's new book *Sacred Ground*.



### Food Bank Sunday

Please bring a donation of non-perishable food items for local food banks to the Sunday service on **February 17**.



**Rev. Larry Hutchison**

Rev. Hutchison's Office Hours

Monday day off

Tuesday 10 - 12

Wednesday 10 - 12 & 6 - 8

Thursday 10 - 12

Friday study at home

E-mail: [minister@uufd.org](mailto:minister@uufd.org)

Phone 352-949-1601 anytime Church phone 875-5442

**You, me and Just for today,**

Today, I am loitering! And I have a vague feeling of naughtiness or embarrassment like, let's move on before somebody sees me.

I didn't shave and maybe I didn't take a shower, I know, it's "the day off" but.... Not to worry, I'm not loitering on anybody's corner.

I'm just loitering. I'm just loitering here in Decatur. There are things -- things I could be doing, people to see, places to go, causes to win, but today I'm really loitering.

Loitering is a particular way of spending time -- a way that is, somewhat paradoxically, particularly not particular. To loiter is to linger, apparently unnecessary and possibly, illegally, depending on the regulation on the space in question. Loiterers are presumed to maintain an overly casual relationship to that most precious of commodities: time. They whittle and while it away; more bluntly, they waste time.

I kinda like loitering! --- I'm doing something different, I'm in a new space. And I'm recommending it, every once in a while, to my highly task oriented friends. And for more encouragement I once read that loitering has been very much a part of "the academy" at Harvard. Yes, they even teach a course in it.

Studio Course: Loitering (fall term) (Tu., Th., 1-4)

That's all I know, for more information you need to contact Harvard. I did enjoy today, but gotta get to work.

Peace,  
Larry

## Presidents Message

February greetings to all you good folks!

What has your Board been doing lately? You are entitled to know two things that have been taking up quite a few of those minutes.

#1 You guessed it! -that poor old sign by the drive. Each week it has been getting harder to put back together – in fact -it’s about to fall apart. Terry has been faithfully getting the new lettering together each week. Then it can be a cold slippery job getting it in place -one I would not like to tackle. So your Board is considering something more in “teck” with the times. One that can be electronically changed from inside. You may say, “these things aren’t cheap” and you are entirely right. It is a major fiscal decision, and I will be calling a special meeting of the membership soon so you can get the details on the proposal that Tim has spent so much of his time on lately.

#2 “Many hands make light work”. You all have been wonderful when asked to help. But have you felt unsure what to say when you are asked to accept an office --chair a committee? Or even be on a committee? A little known Organizational Manual was adopted in 2009; not many copies were still in circulation when I took office last May, and much of the material was outdated. Thanks to the Board’s patience, the updates are almost completed. Within a month it is my hope that the Manual will be available to you on our website. Do key in UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST OF DECATUR and note the new pictures on our great new site. Then in a month go back and check out the manual, and see just how your hands can make the work of the Fellowship roll along with ease!

Finally, please know that Board meetings are open. Feel free to sit in anytime. Best wishes from your prez...Marge

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## News from Religious Education

Intermediate kids – ages 8 and up – will continue to work with Kate Pyle each Sunday, doing age-appropriate exploration of various spiritual themes.

The Elementary kids – ages 7 and younger, will be doing a variety of activities with Jennifer Sekosky, Lorelei Zaker and other guest teachers.

Feb.3 – Mardi Gras/Ash Wednesday – the significance of both holidays and the Catholic faith - Jennifer

Feb. 10 – Valentine's Day – making cards for those we love - Lorelei

Feb. 17 – Presidents Day – learning about the President’s responsibilities and challenges - Jennifer

Feb. 24 – Christianity – Lorelei

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## 2013 Environmental Film Series Coming Soon

The **2013 Environmental Film Series** will begin on March 2nd, with the showing of [Gasland](#).

Other films in the series are *Call of Life* and *Car of the Future* on March 16, *Grow* and *Fresh* on April 6, and *Deep Down* on April 20.

Save the dates and tell your friends!

## **Lucky 13? It Must Be A Sign!**

Was anyone else worried about Sunday, January 13, 2013? Those triskaidekaphobics certainly had a bad day, but it was a great day at the UUFD board meeting. Okay, maybe it was only a great day if you were looking for a sign, but the UUFD board certainly gave us a sign.

What sort of sign? A new sign for the UUFD! The current sign at the base of our driveway leading into the UUFD parking lot has problems. What sort of problems? The primary problem now is its age. Why is that such a problem? The old sign is not produced anymore. Thus, we cannot get any replacement parts. We also struggle to find anyone to work on the sign if there are repairs or problems with it.

Problems with the sign? For one thing, we have to ensure the lighting system works. When those lights go out, we need to get those replaced, and we've had someone do this for us in the past, but it is getting more difficult to secure the parts and the labor to make these repairs. Furthermore, the sign is rather small and does not attract enough attention to encourage visitors to the UUFD. What other problems exist? The next problem, and this is a major concern, is changing the messages each week. The physical demands--the weekly removal of the letter board, removing the old letters and replacing those with the new letters, and then replacing the letter board--present too great a risk.

So how can we eliminate this risk? With a new sign! So where to begin? With the first proposal from YEARS ago? The UUFD liked the idea, but didn't act on it. Therefore, the "new sign" idea languished for some years. But never fear! A committee resumed the project a couple of years ago. How did that go? Same as before! The committee presented several ideas, but those proposals were met with resistance. Let the idea rest for more time. But when interest was expressed once more, another attempt was made at a sign proposal. This time, progress!!! What was the idea that was embraced? Something from Bendsen Signs! What does this involve?

There have been several proposed ideas for this project. The most recent presentation that received preliminary approval from the board has two primary parts. There will be a static upper sign and a dynamic lower sign. The static upper sign would simply read 'Unitarian Universalist Fellowship'. The lower sign, just inches below the upper sign, would be a dynamic LED sign. Where to find this sign? Looking at the measurements, it appears our sign would match identically the First Christian Church sign, just down MacArthur Road. Just drive a bit south to 3350 North MacArthur Road to check it out.

Where would our new sign go? City regulations now prohibit us from putting a new sign in place of the old sign; that old sign is too close to the roadway, but it was grandfathered into its location so we didn't have to move it when the city regulations changed. The new sign would just go further up the hill so it would not be as close to MacArthur road as our existing old sign.

And how about changing the messages on the new sign? That can all be done remotely with software! Therefore, the safety concerns are completely eliminated! "Vern and Terry, don't worry about not having to change those letters anymore. The UUFD will find other things for you to do to keep busy, useful, and contributing to the UUFD!"

What is next? With some minor modifications, the February board meeting will have the final proposal from Bendsen. With proposal in hand, a presentation will be made to the UUFD for approval of this project. Before the presentation, though, maybe you'd like to see or learn more details? Since we already have a good idea of what this final proposal will look like, you can get those details. By the time the final presentation is made to the congregation, you will probably be asked to approve of this proposal. Thus, you can ask for details or clarifications before this presentation if you have concerns. So whom to approach? Contact Tim Rooney at [timothysrooney@hotmail.com](mailto:timothysrooney@hotmail.com) to schedule a meeting or maybe just ask him for some time after a Sunday service. Finally, there's no need to wait for another "13" sign. Just ask Tim ASAP to schedule a meeting and you shall receive!

Tim Rooney

# Humanist Group Report

## A Humanist Journey You Might Imagine

The Humanist group started 2013 with a story. This wasn't just some meandering tale, though. This was a published work from Ken, a longtime, distinguished member of the UUFD. What makes Ken so distinguished? He started the evening by citing some of his credentials--an undergraduate engineering degree, an MBA, some community college courses, and finally more graduate work. Those community college courses and additional graduate work were in literature--somewhat unexpected for an engineer! This didn't slow down Ken one bit, though, with several published books to his name. With his credentials established, Ken began reading "The Unbeliever" from his book *The Best Kind*.

Ken made it through the entire story, and discussion shortly followed. What resources did Ken find helpful for his personal journey? Ken suggested *The Future of Unbelief* by Gerhard Szczesny was a great book from the 1960s that really provided some valuable material and information.

This presented a good opportunity to discuss "belief" and what that entails. Dave noted he was reading a book that investigated "belief" from a genetic level. Is there a "belief gene?" What effect does this have? How does this influence behavior?

Bill was able to quickly respond to Dave's comment and introduce some reading Bill had been doing. Bill was working through Robert Wright's *The Evolution of God*, and Bill briefly outlined the progress and changes the concept of "god" has endured.

Dave then shared a personal experience with the group and related his trip to Thailand. Here he visited a site that had many panels painted with characters from Hindu lore. These Hindu gods were important to Buddhism, and the Buddhist should be able to recognize and explain all these characters and this history. How many Buddhist could actually do this, though?

Perhaps more important, consider some of the principles and ideas central to the Buddhist philosophy. Bill was able to respond and relate how he had adopted many of these ideals in his own life. He reminded us of the four noble truths, the eight fold path, nirvana, meditation, and yoga. No, Bill wasn't a Buddhist in the strictest sense of the word, but Bill did follow many of the principles and precepts espoused by Buddhism.

Kathy then related her father's experience in Alcoholics Anonymous. This program makes God and Jesus essential tenants, and achieving success in AA without this belief in God and Jesus was almost nonsensical. How to make the program work? Kathy's Dad was able to modify all the references to a "higher power." Kathy's Dad just substituted his "own mind" in place of the "higher power" and found that was very effective in guiding him through the program.

We finished the evening discussing the naming of the UUFD and "Fellowship" and "Church" and all the different words to describe us and our building. With Ken's story wrapped up, we get to look forward to the February meeting. We decided to discuss firearms for our next gathering, February 06, 2013 at 7:00 pm. Please join us for the discussion--everyone is welcome! What resources will we have? Kathy suggested everyone bring an article so there was some specific material to discuss. If you can't find an article, though, don't worry. Just show up and discuss the topic, perhaps with particular emphasis on the Sandy Hook elementary school shooting. The Humanist group always welcome new and interested parties to our circle.

Tim Rooney

## February 2013



### 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      Feb. 5  
Nancy Hutchison      Feb. 24

*Want to see your name on the birthday list?  
Send e-mail to [newsletter@uufd.org](mailto:newsletter@uufd.org)*



**minister@uufd.org (Rev. Larry Hutchison)  
president@uufd.org (Marge Evans)  
vicepresident@uufd.org (Rita Schwake)  
treasurer@uufd.org (Mark Sorensen)  
secretary@uufd.org (Barb Hannon)  
programs@uufd.org (Rita Schwake)  
newsletter@uufd.org (Kathy Kline and Terry Ankrom)**