



Rev. Larry Hutchison
Consulting Minister

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Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

Upcoming Services

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

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

January 6 - Zombie Insects and the Fungi that Love Them, or "What is Us?" - Larry Evans

How do two organisms, which have coexisted for millions of years, manage to deal with each others' presence? How do 2 different organisms establish an "equilibrium" of give and take, and how a better understanding of this can improve our lives....

Larry Evans returns to tell us more about fungi. This time his focus will be symbiotic and parasitic relationships. His pictures help tell the story.

January 13 - Theology after Breakfast - Rev. Larry Hutchison

"Theology after breakfast sticks to the eye" is a line from Wallace Stevens' poem "Les Plus Belles Pages". It could be a translation of Feuerbach's diction: "Theology is anthropology". Before breakfast religion is about other worldly stuff, but, after breakfast, the religious thinker realizes that it is about us. After breakfast the projections may still occur, but we know what we know is about the source, not about the target; hence, it sticks to the eye.

Board Meeting at Noon

January 20 - (To Be Announced)

January 27 - Imagination, Inspiration, And Creativity - Sharon Zimmerman & Rev Larry Hutchison

The formula: Inspiration + Imagination = Creativity

Imagination: the ability to recombine experience or memory so as to conceive and express ones ideals or spirit.

Sharon Zimmerman is an active local artist of more than 25 years and a member of UUFD. She is predominately a landscape watercolor artist, but also, oil landscapes and portraits. She will be showing some of her paintings, capturing light and color in nature and sharing that experience through her painting to inspire us. She teaches watercolor and painting at Richland Community College and watercolor workshops at her studio in Argenta. Her work can be seen in galleries and art fairs throughout central IL.

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

Calendar of Events

Wed., January 2 - 10:00 a.m.
Wednesday Morning Covenant Group

Wed., January 2 - 7:00 p.m.
Humanist Discussion Group

Friday, January 4 - 1:00 p.m.
Men's Luncheon at Benny's Grill

Wed., January 9 - 6:00 p.m.
Women's Book Group

Wed., January 9 - 7:00 p.m.
Spiritual Journey Covenant Group

Friday, January 11 - 1:00 p.m.
Men's Luncheon at Benny's Grill

Saturday, January 12 - 9:00 a.m.
NWEI discussion course "Hungry for Change"

Wed., January 16 - 10:00 a.m.
Wednesday Morning Covenant Group

Wed., January 16 - 6:30 p.m.
Decatur Vegetarian Society

Friday, January 18 - 1:00 p.m.
Men's Luncheon at Benny's Grill

Wed., January 23 - 7:00 p.m.
Spiritual Journey Covenant Group

Friday, January 25 - 1:00 p.m.
Men's Luncheon at Benny's Grill

Sat., January 26 - 9:00 a.m.
NWEI Discussion Course, "Hungry for Change"

Sat., January 26
Dinners for Eight

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, January 9th at 6 p.m. The book is *The Empire of the Summer Moon* by S. C. Gwynne. The place is to be announced.

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.



Food Bank Sunday

Please bring a donation of non-perishable food items for local food banks to the Sunday service on **January 20**.



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

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

You, Me, The Facts and Other Stubborn Things

John Adams wrote: "facts are stubborn things; and whatever may be our wishes, our inclinations, or the dictates of our passion, they cannot alter the state of facts and evidence." Or as we have seen from Wallace Stevens, "Theology after breakfast sticks to the eye" (facts). Religion after breakfast is about facts, stubborn facts that stick to the eye. But think about it, the religious thinker, any thinker, you sitting at the breakfast table thinking up plans for a better society, must recognize that the very breakfast you are eating has been produced by a social process well beyond ones detailed facts of comprehension. We know that our breakfast depends upon workers on the coffee plantations of Brazil, the citrus groves of Florida, the sugar fields of the Caribbean, the wheat farms of the Dakotas, the corn and soy from the soil of Macon County, the dairies of Wisconsin, getting here by ships, rail, and big trucks, having been cooked with coal from West Virginia or oil from Iraq in utensils made of aluminum, china, steel, glass, etc. But the intricacy, the facts of one breakfast, if every process that brought it to the table had to be planned, would be beyond the facts, the understanding of any one mind. Only because we are dependent upon so many others in an infinitely complex working relation can we eat our breakfast and then think of a better working world. The facts we can think about are few compared to the facts we must presuppose. Therefore, is the essential limitation of all religion, of all policy, after breakfast, that the human mind must take a partial and oversimplified view of existence? The ocean of experience cannot be poured into the bottle of yesterday's intelligence. Yet, we don't give up, we embrace our humanness, our facts, as we carry on, ever moving forward, ever tugging at and pushing against our limitations, walking into the new year this way and not that, but always arm in arm focusing a wider more inclusive path. We welcome 2013, for the flame burns bright, yes the river is wide but the message is strong, the challenge is big, the facts are many but the spirit runs deep. And on our best days this is what we will be doing here at UUFd; living beings with living facts arm in arm making sense of Decatur in a liberal religious way.

John Maynard Keynes wrote: "When the facts change I change my mind. What do you do?"

Happy New Year,
Larry

Presidents Message

HAPPY NEW YEAR ALL YOU GOOD FOLKS!

Ah! January. One of my favorite months! Now there is no urge to be outdoors. There is time for indoor "catch-ups". Time to read. Time to learn something new. Time to try to write something. Or there is time to call a friend and have a leisurely lunch. Might there be time to say "yes" to that UU activity or committee request for help? While you adjust to your new 2013 calendar might you mark in events from the UU calendar?

The discussion course books **Hungry for Change** are in the lobby so you can check them out and sign up if you are interested in joining the group. Again the dates for the course are Saturdays Jan 12th, 26th and February 9th -- 9:00 AM to noon.

A second discussion course from the NORTHWEST EARTH INSTITUTE will be offered on two Sunday afternoons in February: **Powering a Bright Future** will be discussed on the 17th and the 24th beginning at 12:30 PM. Session One **The Big Picture: Shedding Light on Energy**, establishes a basic understanding of energy sources and end uses, and explores issues of energy use, extraction, equity, access, policy, and connections to climate change. Session Two **How to Plug In** considers what changes need to be made in order to create a sustainable energy future. A sign up sheet for this will also be in the lobby, or email me at mmedec@aol.org

Dinners for 8 (7,8,or 9) will be Saturday evening January 26th . Don't miss out on this fun time to do what we do best: "greeting our neighbors" -this time over dinner. Please excuse me if I blow a horn for my son. Larry is back from another quest for mushrooms in South America and has agreed to speak again on fungi on Sunday January 6th. This time his focus will be on some amazing interrelationships. (note the calendar) He'll also speak at Rock Springs Center at 2:00 PM on the 5th.

May your January days be bright with opportunity. Cheers! Marge

News from Religious Education



RE will be ringing in the new year with lessons and activities based on the seven principles, and Martin Luther King, Jr day. We have two age groups to meet the needs of our students and always welcome visitors!

Dinners For 8

On Saturday, January 26th we will continue a long-standing UUFD Tradition of good food, fellowship and fun. This is a pot-luck style dinner for approximately 8 people in the home of one of our members. Please fill out the sign up sheet in the UUFD foyer or email kathysorensen1@comcast.net with your desire to host or attend "Dinners for 8". We will organize as many dinners as possible on the same night.

Kathy Sorensen, Chair
Hospitality Committee

Humanist Group Report

A surprising welcome to 2013 as the world did not end on December 21, 2012--as predicted by the Mayan calendar! Perhaps all the Humanists of the world weren't really surprised by this fortunate continuation of existence here on earth? Regardless of all the press and excitement generated by this curious fantasy, the Humanist group at the UUFDF carries on, laying new paths into 2013.

Before delving into 2013, a summary of the 2012 December meeting of the UUFDF Humanists is due. We wrapped up the discussion on education in December. Sure, this was originally due to start and finish in September of 2012, but the UUFDF Humanists are a dedicated and persevering group! This continuation of the November meeting was a concerted effort by several of the regulars as four sub-topics were presented regarding education.

To begin the meeting, Lynn Crow volunteered to present some of the information she'd found about continuing teacher training. One great example of this was to examine education around the world. What were the requirements and expectations for teachers in other developed countries? In the European countries, requirements and expectations for teachers are MUCH greater than here in the United States. To teach at the high school level in Europe, a Masters degree is required as well as one year of student teaching. Some countries even require two years of student teaching to work at the high school level. How is that possible? In Europe, student teaching is a paid position—much like doctors working on a residency here in the United States.

This provided a nice transition for Tim Rooney to begin presentation of the results of tracking in schools. How have enriched programs benefited students? Benefited society? Perhaps penalized people instead of helping? The research in this area is abundant, but it is also very inconclusive. With no definitive evidence to support or discourage tracking, is it a good idea to continue? Sure, it's not evident that it helps improve the economic output of society, but what other benefits or deficiencies are found? How much more research can be done to get a definitive answer? And in looking for this definitive answer, maybe the Internet could provide the hoped for data?

This was a great spot for Kathy Sorensen to present details of online education. What a great resource for this task since Kathy worked in the Admissions office at Richland Community College for years! How were online courses to begin with? Terrible! Students didn't enjoy the classes and employers found that the online classes weren't preparing students for work that had to be done in industry. Not a good start! Thankfully, though, the online education model has matured and is making progress in becoming a viable resource for formal education. It is already a great asset for those interested in gaining personal—although not yet formally recognized—knowledge and advancement. Where could you begin exploring these online education systems? Check out <http://www.khanacademy.org/> or <http://www.edx.org/> to start.

Finally, Larry Hutchison wrapped things up for the evening as concisely as he could. He did suggest before he began speaking that his topic, poverty and education, was far reaching and significant enough to be a Wednesday night topic all to itself. With this disclaimer noted, he began with the unsurprising conclusion that for student below the poverty line, performance was equal regardless of country of origin. This means that the poor are not succeeding in education to the same degree as any of their socioeconomic superiors. This suggests that poverty and not country of origin is the real cause for the problems in education.

As the meeting wound down, Rex Crow posed a unexpected yet incredibly insightful question. What should we take away from two Humanist meetings about education? One anticipated outcome was that awareness could be increased regarding the state of education throughout the world. But that's not enough! How can we do something about this? Visit www.boostup.org to make a difference!

Finally, what can be expected from the Humanists in January? We will be meeting on Wednesday, January 2, and Ken Robertson, renowned author, will be presenting his story "The Unbeliever" from his book [The Best Kind](#). Join us to compare your Humanist journey to Ken's story.

January 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.

January Birthdays

Denise Lohrenz-Renfro	Jan. 6
Jasmyn Zaker	Jan. 8
Mark Sorensen	Jan. 20
Caius Pajer	Jan. 21
Hadrian Pajer	Jan. 21
Amy Stockwell	Jan. 22

*Want to see your name on the birthday list?
Send e-mail to newsletter@uufd.org*



**minister@uufd.org (Rev. Larry Hutchison)
president@uufd.org (Marge Evans)
vicepresident@uufd.org (Rita Schwake)
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