

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship



Rev. Larry Hutchison
Consulting Minister

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

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UUFD Trust Board:
Ken Robertson
Vern Thistlethwaite
Dave Snoeyenbos



Upcoming Services

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

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

May 5 - "Songs of the Earth" Jim Scott

Jim Scott, Unitarian Universalist activist, has performed at over 300 UU churches. He is an exciting acoustic guitarist, singer, composer, and speaker that furthers the ideals of ecology, justice, and peace. He makes an impact on hearts and minds across the world. He sees his guitar as an instrument to build bridges between people. His performances are celebrations of the common humanity of all cultures and are connections with each other and the earth.

2:00 pm- Jim Scott will perform at a Coffeehouse Concert at the 1st Presbyterian Church sponsored by 1st Presbyterian Peace Group. All are invited!

May 12 - "The Tao of Mother's Day" Rev. Larry Hutchison

Mothering is nurturing a child into a flourishing life. Like a tree born to grow, we are born to flourish. The Taoist would say that the highest value is life, so the highest practice is the art of nourishing life. "The voyage of discovery is not seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes." Marcel Proust
Board Meeting at noon.

May 19 - "Neighborhood Manifesto" Rev. Larry Hutchison

We reach out to stay in touch because we care!
The State of the Fellowship is always an individual's take on things. We will be sharing different takes on the state of things here at UUFD. We can all ponder our take and stake on the state of liberal religion in the neighborhood of Macon County.
Annual Congregational Meeting Following Service

May 26 - "In Search of Dialogue" Rev. Larry Hutchison

For Me, Memorial Day is a Vote for Democracy
To have a strong Democracy, we need to have mindful discourse. A distinguishing characteristic of mindful discourse, is that we want the values and practices of our UU paths to manifest themselves in our behavior. It is one thing to talk about compassion, for example, but cultivating ourselves is our aim. Ultimately the world is most helped when we transform ourselves.

Calendar of Events

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

Wed., May 1- 10:00 a.m.
Wednesday Morning Covenant Group

Wed., May 1 - 7:00 p.m.
Humanist Discussion Group

Friday, May 3 - 1:00 p.m.
Men's Lunch at Benny's Grill

Wed., May 8 - 6:00 p.m.
Women's Book Group

Wed., May 8 - 7:00 p.m.
Spiritual Journey Covenant Group

Friday, May 10 -1:00 p.m.
Men's Lunch at Benny's Grill

Wed., May 15 - 10:00 a.m.
Wednesday Morning Covenant Group

Wed., May 15 - 6:30 p.m.
Decatur Vegetarian Society

Friday, May 17 - 1:00 p.m.
Men's Lunch at Benny's Grill

Wed., May 22 - 7:00 p.m.
Spiritual Journey Covenant Group

Friday, May 24- 1:00 p.m.
Men's Lunch at Benny's Grill

Fri. May 31 - 1:00 p.m.
Men's Lunch at Benny's Grill

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, May 8 at 6 pm at Sharon Zimmerman's home. The book is *Plain Truth* by Jodi Picoult.

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 **May 19**.



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 and Compassion

Decatur Charter For Compassion

The principle of compassion lies at the heart of all religious, ethical and spiritual traditions, calling us always to treat all others as we wish to be treated ourselves. Compassion impels us to work tirelessly to alleviate the suffering of our fellow creatures, to dethrone ourselves from the center of our world and put another there, and to honor the inviolable sanctity of every single human being, treating everybody, without exception, with absolute justice, equity and respect.

It is also necessary in both public and private life to refrain consistently and empathically from inflicting [pain](#). To act or [speak](#) violently out of spite, chauvinism, or self-interest, to impoverish, exploit or deny basic rights to anybody, and to incite hatred by denigrating others—even our enemies—is a denial of our common humanity. We acknowledge that we have failed to live compassionately and that some have even increased the sum of human misery in the name of religion.

We therefore call upon all men and women to restore compassion to the center of morality and religion ~ to return to the ancient principle that any interpretation of scripture that breeds violence, hatred or disdain is illegitimate ~ to ensure that youth are given accurate and respectful information about other traditions, religions and cultures ~ to encourage a positive appreciation of cultural and religious diversity ~ to cultivate an informed empathy with the suffering of all human beings—even those regarded as enemies.

We urgently need to make compassion a clear, luminous and dynamic force in our polarized world. Rooted in a principled determination to transcend selfishness, compassion can break down political, dogmatic, ideological and religious boundaries. Born of our deep interdependence, compassion is essential to human relationships and to a fulfilled humanity. It is the path to enlightenment, and indispensable to the creation of a just economy and a peaceful global community.

Add your name or organization to the Charter. Each additional name amplifies the compassionate voice in the world.

Name _____ Email _____

Organization _____ Address _____

The Fellowship will be voting on supporting the Decatur Charter For Compassion at the annual congregational meeting or you can sign it as an individual and turn in to the Fellowship office. Thanks.

Presidents Message

To all you good folks--

I am most grateful to all you good folks who entrusted me with the privilege of serving as your president this past year. A second thanks goes to the members of the Board for their patience through some meetings that at times were a bit long. To Mark Sorensen, whose talents as Treasurer are exceeded only by his willingness to do most everything else. To Barbara Hannon as Secretary, who deserves a medal for her patience in trying to decipher all that is mumbled during meetings. Somehow we did accomplish a revision of the Organizational Manual which will define for all you good folks to follow a clear statement of responsibilities. Not that we want to scare you away – surely that will never be the case – but so you will feel comfortable in saying “yes” when asked or when you volunteer. Only through job-sharing can our wonderful fellowship flourish! So here’s more kudos to the committee chairs: to Darwin Shroyer for his persistent overseeing of the needs of our building and grounds, and a special thanks for that new water fountain! To Joyce for stepping in to oversee the Finance committee; to Kathy Kline and Deonne Orvis for taking on the Green Sanctuary committee and the environmental film series; to Kathy Sorensen for all her work in organizing the Hospitality; for Linda Shroyer for doing double-duty with Membership and Outreach (these jobs will be split next year); thanks to Rita Schwake and her Program committee for a host of good programs on those “extra” Sundays; and what would we do without Lorelei for all the time and energy spent on RE. Kathy Vaught came up with some ideas for fundraising, and while I asked Jane Brooks to oversee the music, it was decided to give that responsibility to the Program Committee. These kudos would not be complete without thanks to your loyal Members at Large on the Board: Mel Weinstein, Joyce Throneburg and Mary Cleave, and to the good “Keepers of the Trust” Ken Robertson, Vern Thistlethwaite and Dave Snoeyenbos. See how many hands make light work! All this praise would not be complete without mentioning how great it has been to work with Larry- and Nancy, too. He has never failed to give that “extra measure” of time and support. You probably noticed that he also helped assemble the “round the tree” bench, which was no small feat! Wow! Aren’t we fortunate to have such a wonderful pair guiding us!

Marge

News from Religious Education

May brings flowers and sunshine and lots of fun and learning in RE!



May 5 – Make Mother's day gift – Jennifer

May 12 – Mother's Day; different kinds of families/moms – Lorelei

May 19 – Picnic/Party for End of Church Year – Jennifer

May 26 – Summer session begins – Lorelei

More on Sunday, May 5 Service



"Gaia, Mother Earth and the Oneness of Everything" A worship service with musician Jim Scott

UU troubadour Jim Scott intersperses original songs and readings with his personal reflections on a spiritual ecological awareness. The idea of Mother Earth or "Gaia" being a living organism with the same physical attributes as humans leads us to a deeper connection with our life support system. Jim holds that churches can offer the "spiritual response" so timely now, as "the spirit of life on earth is in crisis." Jim's uplifting songs provide the balance to the "wake up call," leaving participants with a vision and inspiration to take the healing into our own hands.

From his work with the Paul Winter Consort, where he was co-composer of their celebrated "Missa Gaia / Earth Mass" Jim has long been an activist for peace and the earth with his music. Former Co Chair of the UU Ministry for the Earth, Jim helped create the "Green Sanctuary" program. His songs of earth have educated and inspired audiences across the US and the world and his "Earth and Spirit Songbook," supported by a grant from the Fund for Unitarian Universalism, has been widely acclaimed by UU congregations.

General Assembly, A Meeting of Congregations

**General Assembly 2013
June 19-23, Louisville, KY**

You are invited to attend the 2013 General Assembly (GA) in Louisville, Kentucky. The theme of this GA is "From Promise to Commitment." Building on the experience of Justice GA, we will gather in Louisville to examine and renew our covenant to our faith, one another, our congregations and the larger world.

Programs will explore the kinds of promises our religious communities are called to make as we seek to live out our Unitarian Universalist values; how we make these promises, with whom, and how we hold ourselves and each other accountable. Here are just some of the topics that will be addressed: environmental justice, the next steps in immigration justice, anti-racism, anti-oppression multiculturalism, organizing for justice, multigenerational work, growing Unitarian Universalism, leadership education, spiritual growth and theology. There will also be many, many opportunities to worship.

More information at [http:// www.uua.org/ga/index.shtml](http://www.uua.org/ga/index.shtml)

Humanist Group

The Humanist Group met at the UFD on Wednesday, April 3. This meeting was a continuation from the March meeting, and we were able to finish discussion regarding a book written by the founder of the Humanist Group, Doug. In sorting through the many philosophical and ethical questions facing the world today, Doug finds it best to write on those topics. Without feedback, though, the ideas and perspectives just languish. The Humanist group is a great way to explore those ideas.

We started the April discussion by finishing the last item discussed at the March meeting, economic growth. Another one of the regular members, Kevin, brought his personal work experience as perspective. He related the cost, time, and effort needed to collect oil. One of the most important parts of his day, though, was delivering the report regarding progress of the work. This had to be done from a land line telephone, and the report had to be made well before 8:00 each morning. Today, this would be no problem with cell-phones, but it was a much more arduous process when Kevin was working.

With the end of that topic, Doug moved the discussion to wealth distribution. This global economy is improving conditions for the poor, but this improvement is only very marginal. Another part of society--the wealthy, rich nations--are improving a great amount. Yes, the wealth distribution does help everyone, but the well-to-do are benefited to a much greater extent. Why? Since the wealthy exert great influence and control in the government, that group is able to shape things to its advantage. These rich nations also have the benefit of technology and all the wealth and aid that brings. Although the conversation shifted to technology, that was a topic to be discussed later.

Next, we moved to discussing Globalization. The rich nations are utilizing (exploiting?) the poor nations' people and resources. How can this situation be made fair? We need to see the world as a global population instead of my city, my state, my country, my race. We were not able to detail how to do this, but we did acknowledge something must be done to affect this perspective.

Hungry for a different topic, Doug moved to the book's next chapter, food. How to feed the world? We noted a vegetarian planet could be fed much more easily, practically, and healthily. Ironically, as the world increases in wealth, society is going in the opposite direction and consuming much more meat and many fewer vegetables. One of our new attendees chimed in here. Steven suggested education as a solution. He cited a movie, **Idiocracy**, as a great and entertaining example to illustrate his point.

The conversation then turned to technology. From earlier in the evening, we had already noted that until recently, improvements in technology created a sustainable environment. Sure, your carriage driver and carriage maker were replaced by the automobile, but the factory worker and cab driver were hired to replace those eliminated jobs. Only within the last ten years has this replacement shifted to elimination. The new technology is not creating jobs but only replacing people with machines or automation. How to get around this? Could we employ more people to work fewer hours? Just make the standard work week 36 hours and increase the workforce by 10%? And what about technology increasing human lifespan? But how good is this if quality of life is also not improved?

Religion was examined next. How has religion positioned itself against science? Is this only happening in the biology/evolution department? Science encourages questions and doubt. Religion discourages or condemns this doubt. But religion does help the poor and disadvantaged with food, services, and many other benefits. Doug suggested we must examine the net benefit. Is the good done by religion worth the pain, suffering, and strife that also accompanies this institution?

Wrapping up discussion, we agreed to let Travis lead discussion next month. On Wednesday, May 01, 2013 at 7:00 p.m., the Humanist group will discuss the role of women in the military, particularly the recent decision by the United States Armed Forces to allow women to serve in combat.

Tim Rooney

May 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.

May Birthdays

Julie Pajer May 19

Terry Hogg May 28

*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)
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