



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Decatur



News and Notes

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



June/July 2017

Our services

At **10:15 a.m.**, unless otherwise noted

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

June 4 – Amos – A Prophet for Today, Rev. Miley Palmer.

One of our favorite speakers will return to explore the theme that a common man, living 750 years before Jesus of Nazareth, addressed. These themes remain appropriate in the Era of Trump. Dick Zaker is service leader

choosing. Multigenerational service.

June 18 – Sodom and Gomorrah: Sin or Saving Grace? Rev. Michelle LaGrave.

Some elements of modern Christianity have cited this Biblical story as “evidence” of homosexuality being considered a sin in God’s eyes. What does the Bible really say? What lessons on morality, if any, can we take from this story?



July 2 – No Service. Celebrate the holiday with loved ones.

July 9, July 16, July 23, and July 30 – We will not be holding Sunday services at UUFd. Instead, we will gather at UUFd and organize ourselves into carpools to visit the other UU churches in our region: Springfield, Champaign-Urbana, Bloomington-Normal, and Peoria. This presents an opportunity to experience how other UU churches “do” church. Details will be coming from Jim Palmer soon.



June 11 – Flower Communion, Rev. Michelle LaGrave.

This traditional annual service was created by Norbert Capek, a Unitarian minister who served the church in Prague during WWII. All are invited to bring a flower or two of your



9 a.m. (note time change). June 25 – Live Stream General Assembly Worship Service.



REal Cool Sunday School

Last month, the children at UUFD had a wonderful time at the first Kids' Night Out! Thank you so very much for all the work put into planning and putting on of this event. Kathy Sorensen, Mary Lovell, Rene Verry, Chloe Clark - it was a great event, and all your hard work is very appreciated - by the kids and also by the parents who got to go out for their very own parents' night out! There was slime making, t-shirt decorating, charade playing, pizza eating, and movie watching going on for a fun-filled 4-hour night of fun!!!

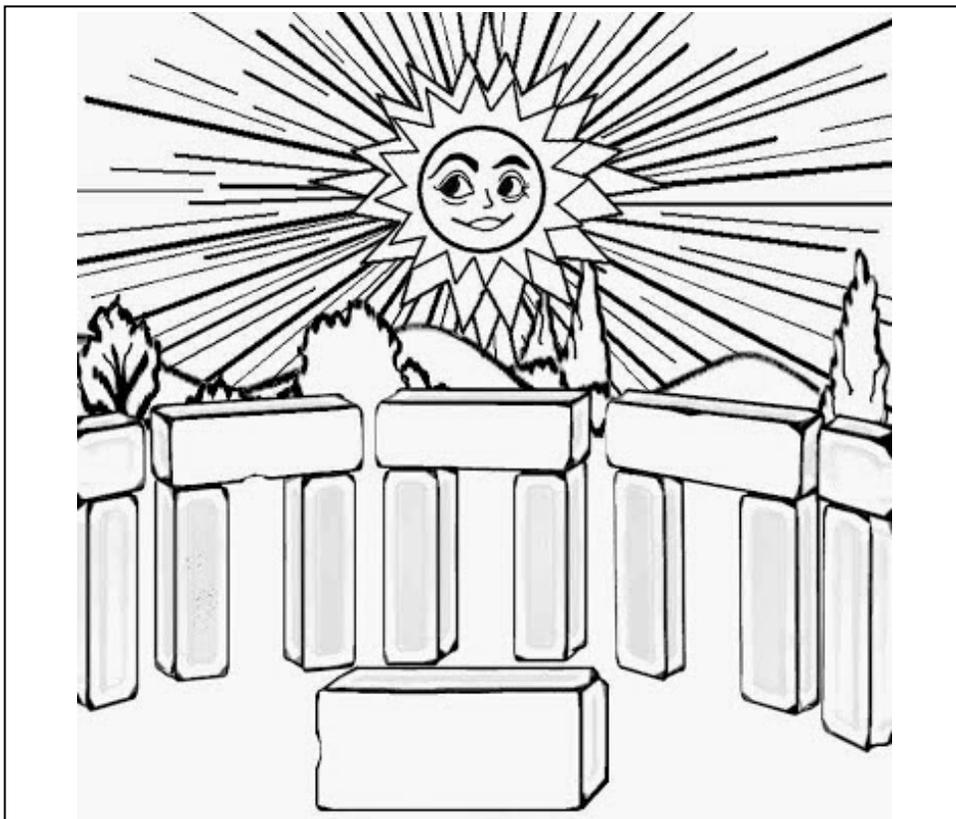
This month on the first Sunday, June 4, we will be getting back to Toolbox of Faith with session 11, which will discuss listening with the tool being the stethoscope. Then the second Sunday, June 11, will be our Flower Communion. This will be a youth Sunday with many jobs available for the children to help out with during the service. Everyone is asked to bring a flower to the service.

This month ends the year for RE since we will be visiting other nearby UU churches in the month of July. I have enjoyed my time here in the last year, getting to know more about UUism and the people here at UUFD. I am looking forward to summer and will be back after summer break to get started again in August.



Emily Richard
RE Teacher

-Emily Richard, UUFD RE teacher



Summer Solstice

Summer Solstice is an ancient holiday. The word solstice is derived from Latin meaning sun (sol) and to stand still (sistere) for the time in which the sun appears to stand still, moving neither north nor south for several days. The sun is now beginning its journey south while the earth is just beginning to heat up and begin to bring forth the life that awakened at spring.



The **UU Humanist Group** will NOT meet in June and July but will resume meeting the first Wednesday in August.

Lifetime Religious Education Working Group, 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, June 7.

Mindfulness & Spirituality, 7 p.m. Thursday, June 1 and 15. This UUFDF group meets on the first and third Thursday of each month in the Sanctuary to have a session of silent meditation and to discuss a

spirituality topic. We start promptly at 7 p.m. with the meditation, so please arrive early and enter in silence. Contact Mel Weinstein for information: mel.weinstein.domehome@gmail.com

The Women's Book Club, 5 p.m. Wednesday, June 14, at the home of Sharon Zimmerman. The book is *A Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles. Bring a dish to share for dinner. Contact Kathy Sorensen at (kathysorensen1@comcast.net) to RSVP and for directions to Sharon's home in Argenta.

Committee on Ministry, 3 p.m. Thursday, June 15.

Gay and Lesbian Association of Decatur, 6:30 p.m. Saturday, June 10. Please contact one of the co-chairs: Jerry Bowman at

bufnjer@live.com or UUFDF member Rene Verry.

Spiritual Art Play, 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, June 20. Play with art as a form of spiritual self-expression. The goal is not to make crafts or works of art, but to explore ourselves more deeply, to express our values and ideas, to make beauty present in the world. All forms of media are welcome: paint, colored pencils, ink, collage, clay, paper cutting, journaling, writing, book making, weaving, knitting, etc. Bring something you are already working on or start something new.

NEW! Women's Lunch! 11:30 a.m., Wednesday, June 28 at Cheddar's. Call or email Judy Thistlethwaite for a reservation.

8 p.m. Saturday, June 24
Live Streaming of the Ware Lecture
at the Unitarian Universalist General Assembly
New Orleans, LA

Bryan Stevenson

Founder and Executive Director of the Equal Justice Initiative in Montgomery, Ala., Stevenson is a widely acclaimed public interest lawyer who has dedicated his career to helping the poor, the incarcerated and the condemned. Named in Fortune's 2016 World's Greatest Leaders list, he is the recent author of the critically acclaimed New York Times bestseller, *Just Mercy*.



Snacks provided.

In Michelle's words

Dearest Ones,

Summer is almost upon us. It has been a good and full



church year, though a few weeks remain. A new slate of officers has been elected and the

transition to new leadership has begun. It is interesting to me that in many ways our UU church year reflects the old cycles of nineteenth century agricultural life when the Unitarian and Universalist churches were first formed in the United States – even our fellowship, formed in the following century, reflects this pattern! It used to be that school was held in the summer and the winter, the slower seasons of the year on a farm, though, of course, the work never fully ceases. Children were needed at home for planting and harvesting, and so school took breaks at those times. In fact, some places still do. When I lived in Northern Maine, the middle and high schools took a 2-week break every fall so the children could work the potato harvest with their families.

What I like about this cycle is its alternating focus on body and mind. Spring and fall are seasons of the body. We are physically busy with activity and productivity. Winter and Summer are seasons of the mind. We focus on learning and renewing our spirits. This cycle provides balance and can remind us of the need for both body and mind. Sustaining a liberal religious presence requires physical energy; there are many tasks to be done if we are to be successful. Sustaining a liberal religious presence also requires mental energy; our intellect, emotions and spirit need to be periodically refreshed and renewed.

This July, we will not be holding our own Sunday services here at UUFD. Instead, we will gather at UUFD and organize ourselves into carpools to visit the other UU churches in our region: Springfield, Champaign-Urbana, Bloomington-Normal, and Peoria. This presents an opportunity to experience how other UU churches “do” church. I encourage you to go, be curious, ask questions, seek out your counterparts and begin building relationships. These experiences can

become part of creating a vital UUFD.

This summer, allow your body to play. Enjoy the sun, the water, the air and the earth. Engage your mind. Read, learn, be curious. Renew your spirits. We will return to a new church year later this summer refreshed, re-energized, ready.

In Spirit,

Rev. Michelle

**Rev. Michelle LaGrave
Minister
Unitarian Universalist
Fellowship of Decatur, IL**

**michellelagrave@gmail.com
or minister@uufd.org
860-539-3248 (cell)**

NEW Office hours:

Monday: Day Off

**Tuesday: 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
(most weeks)**

Wednesday: 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Thursday: 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

**Fridays: Reading and
Writing Day - phone calls for
urgent matters welcome.**

Also by appointment.

**(Rev. Michelle is gone until
June 6.)**

Getting on Board

Leading up to the Congregational Meeting on May 21, your UUFDB Board had some pretty sobering prospects to make about the budget for this coming church year. There was, and is, the possibility that pledges will not reach the total optimistically listed on the revenue side of the budget. Three officers volunteered to call members and friends who had not returned their pledges as of the May 14 Board meeting date.

The total financial response we see from all will determine how far we go in this year ahead. The Board decided not to ask the membership to take more from the Trust than what has been done the last two years, so that isn't being seen as an option for increased income. The Board on June 11 will do an updated assessment of the pledges and may have to decrease some line items. Some fundraising ideas are being thought of to help with the budget.

Also at the May 14 meeting, Rev. Michelle explained her concept of reorganizing the activities of the Fellowship into Working Groups. Our traditional committee structure would be converted into five groups: Community Building, Community Action, Buildings and Grounds, Sunday Services and Lifetime Religious Education.

To summarize the responsibilities, Community Building would bring together such tasks as hospitality and marketing under one umbrella, Community Action would oversee work in environmental, social justice and other areas, Buildings and Ground would center on maintenance,

capital needs and accessibility, Sunday Services would concern itself with program scheduling, Sanctuary aesthetics, etc., and Lifetime Religious Education would encompass activities for adults as well as children.

As of now, the "point people" for these Working Groups are: Dick and Lorelei Zaker (Community Building), Rene Verry and Kathy Vaught (Community Action), Amy Stockwell (Buildings and Grounds), Joyce Throneburg and Pat Rossiter (Sunday Services) and Kathy Kline and Melissa Hendrian for Lifetime Religious Education. Those of you who have had jobs you love won't have to change them, but you may be approached about taking on a new role for this coming year. This much is clear: To accomplish even as much as we did this year, we will need MORE buy-in from more of you this year.

The next board meeting will be 12:15 p.m., Sunday, June 11. Please feel free to attend.



Congregation charts its future

On May 21, you UUFD members took the church's future in your hands. The 22 who attended the annual meeting approved a tough budget, elected officers for the coming year and approved the first step in exploring a solar-enhanced building.



The \$98,000 spending plan includes no big, new initiatives, although it allows a 2% increase in total compensation for our full-time minister. It is premised on almost \$57,000 in pledges, which is ambitious, based on current trends.

Rev. Michelle reported on outreach activities, Religious Education improvements and strong web site and Facebook presence among progress steps during the year.

Trust Board member Joyce Throneburg reported on the progress of our funds and especially the transition of investment oversight to a national, Unitarian Universalist Association joint pool.

Outgoing President Dick Zaker appealed for more effort from everyone to maintain those progress steps and new ones envisioned. Incoming Treasurer Amy Stockwell distributed copies of the proposed budget, with visuals to describe the income and spending breakdowns.

Incoming President Rene Verry presented the slate of officers for the upcoming church year: Vice President, Kathy Vaught; Treasurer, Amy Stockwell; Secretary, Melissa Hendrian; and At-Large members, Pat Rossiter, Kathy Kline and Lorelei Zaker. All were elected unanimously.

Rene encouraged members to live our principles of social action by increasing our community activities and through the energetic welcoming of new people. Mark Sorensen reflected on 17 years of continuous service on the Board and especially as Treasurer.

Marge Evans, on behalf of the Green Sanctuary Committee, sought a consensus from UUFD members on the interest in installing solar panels for the Fellowship Building. In response, those at the annual meeting unanimously passed a motion for the Fellowship to develop a series of programs to inform us, and the community, about the viability of adding solar panels or solar roof tiles to reduce our consumption of fossil fuels. An ad hoc working group would include Rene Verry, Marge Evans, Mel Weinstein, Amy Stockwell and possibly other members of Green Sanctuary.



Birthdays

Notice that some of our birthdays for June and July are for friends whom we seldom see? Why not send birthday greetings to brighten their days?

Joan Brown
4731 S. Hudson Place
Tulsa, OK 74135-6923

John Hays (who will be 90!)
570 W. William
Decatur, IL 62522

We're blessed to see June Allison on most Sundays, but she would enjoy a visit or card on her special day also!

June Allison
Symphony of Decatur
2530 N Monroe St.
Decatur, IL 62526

Hear ye, hear ye

Leading a Sunday service soon? Please submit the description and a photo of your speaker. Have a big development in your life, such as an honor or a grandchild excelling in some activity? Treat this Newsletter as your personal announcement page. And please aim to meet the deadlines – it makes life SO much easier on the Newsletter editor. Thanks.



UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY



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June

June Allison	June 29
Joan Brown	June 30

July

Linda Shroyer	July 6
John Hays	July 21
Al Brumett	July 31

If YOU want to get some recognition, email newsletter@uufd.org

Lorelei Zaker is the editor of this Newsletter.
The deadline for the August edition is July 24.
Newsletter@uufd.org

Find us on the Internet

Facebook page: UUFD - Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Decatur, IL
Twitter: UU Decatur
Thank you for helping us raise awareness of UUFD via social media.