



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Decatur



January 2019 News

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

**Our services: 10:15 a.m.,
with religious education and child care**

Jan. 6: "Of Splendid Vision" with Rev. Larry Hutchison



Beginning with the Gnostic Gospels and moving through Black Elk's Great Vision into UUism today, we will study the hermeneutics of vision to see, interpret and build a UUFD vision for 2019.

Jan. 13: "The Nine: The implications and Possibilities of the New Supreme Court" with Professor Amber Lusvardi

A new year brings a new session of the U.S. Supreme Court. The High Court now is considered part of the polarized political landscape of Washington, D.C. With two relatively new justices on the bench, what does the future of the court look like? Amber Lusvardi, instructor of political science at Millikin University, will give her insights. Mark Sorensen is service leader.



Jan. 20: "Standing in the Gap" with Alida Graham



Old Kings Orchard Community Center makes a big difference by providing resources and support for our city's most vulnerable citizens. Alida Graham, Old Kings



Hope this wet and warm forecast encourages you about the winter ahead. Here's our cancellation policy: When a service is canceled due to inclement weather, an email will be sent to those who receive the weekly eBlasts by 7:30 a.m. that morning. If you don't receive the weekly emails, call President Kathy Vaught, 620-7644, or Dick Zaker, 791-3854, any time after 7:30 to inquire.

Orchard board president, will share the successes and challenges of this organization's work in the inner city of Decatur. Judy Thistlethwaite is service leader.

Jan. 27: "Where Have All the Prophets Gone?" with Rev. Larry Hutchison

"What manner of man (woman) is the prophet?" Abraham Heschel asks in the opening pages of his book, "The Prophets". A person whose "life and soul are at stake in what he (she) says". Starting with Jeremiah, we will continue reflecting on our vision for 2019.

May 2019 be bright and fulfilling for you all!



UU Humanists – Will not meet in January but will resume Feb. 6. with a discussion on gambling.

Positively Plant Based for Life – 7 p.m., Tuesday, Jan. 8.

UU Men's Lunch – 1 p.m., Wednesday, Jan. 9, Sol Bistro, 237 N. Main St., Decatur

Women's Book Group – 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 9 (note earlier time), home of Kathy Sorensen. The book is "To Kill A Mockingbird." Bring a dish to share and RSVP to kathysorensen1@comcast.net

Media Outreach Committee – 6 p.m., Thursday, Jan. 10

UUFD Board Meeting – 12:15 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 13

UU Women's Lunch – 11:30 a.m., Wednesday, Jan. 23, Cheddars, near Hickory Point Mall. Contact Judy (429-5923 or jthistle@comcast.net) to help make a more accurate reservation.

Publish your event or meeting in the weekly e-Blast – submit items to eblast_mgrs@uufd.org by Monday of each week.

Tids & Bits

Thanks to Ryan Raleigh for helping Mark and Kathy Sorensen pick up and mulch many leaves on the UUFD grounds.

New nutrition group to meet at UUFD

Last summer, three Decaturites formed a local group called "Positively Plant Based For Life." So far, we have given a few presentations, but recently we decided to branch out and also have monthly meetings with a short video presentation, some discussion and a healthy snack.

Positively Plant Based is for anyone interested in exploring the idea of eating more healthy plant foods, vegans or not. It's free, including the snack.

We will have our first meeting at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship on Jan. 8 at 7 p.m. with an ending time of 8:30. Short videos, totaling 24 minutes, will be shown on the topic of Type 2 diabetes. We will also have a discussion about eating plant-based foods, a table display of locally available transition foods, and some handouts.

This will be a fun and informative meeting and a good way to start the year by committing to a healthy diet! Come join us! Go to our Facebook page at Positively Plant Based for Life - Community.

– from **Mel Weinstein**

That's Athena at the camera

That tripod you've seen in church services lately is being helmed by Athena Pajer. She has demonstrated her talents in writing and photography in the Millikin newspaper and now is expanding the video.

She's agreed to record programs for archiving and online availability. The details still are being worked out, but this promises to be an important new communications tool.

Getting on Board, looking ahead, enjoying progress

The UUFD Board is keeping on top of many present and future activities of the Fellowship, including:

■ Welcoming Mel Weinstein's Positively

Plant-Based for Life group, which will meet at the church on the first Tuesday of the month

■ Looking forward to the annual Environmental Film

Series, debuting in late January

■ Advising that all activities keep young families in mind when scheduling their events.

Hey, all you great people who step up and provide snacks for the

period after services: Did we say you're great?

One tiny reminder: Remember to set aside a plate that

can be taken to our Religious Education class.



Rev. Larry Hutchison

**lghutch@yahoo.com or minister@uufd.org
352-949-1601**

**Office hours
Tues. 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Wed. 6 - 9 p.m.
Thurs. 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.**

Call first or drop in if you see my car. Or call to set up a time to meet or email, text or Facebook message.

Always happy to hear from you.

You, me and a ton of thank you!

So we have been here five months as we close out 2018. For the wonderful welcome, all the work, enthusiasm and generosity given, Nancy and I say a big THANK YOU!!

You have made this an exciting time to be in Decatur and at UUFD.

We look forward to the new year with excitement and hope.

With peace and happiness,

*Happy New Year!!!
Larry & Nancy*

Please remember those in facilities, including

John Regan, Hickory Point Christian Village, Room 204.

Mary Cleave at Primrose Retirement Community, Room 103.

John Hays, at Heritage Health, 1225 Woodland Dr., Mount Zion, 62549.

Find us on the Internet

Facebook page: UUFD - Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Decatur, IL
Web site: uufd.org

Dick Zaker is Newsletter editor.
February edition deadline: Jan. 25.
Newsletter@uufd.org

Religious Education will only get better in the new year

Happy New Year!

Thank you to all who attended our holiday service on Dec. 23. The children did a wonderful job performing their songs. They had a great time dancing and playing games at the reception following the service. It was a lovely evening with delicious treats, laughter and filled with holiday spirit.



Lisa Coates

In January, we're looking forward to learning about Kwanzaa. Even though the holiday will be over, I feel it is important to acknowledge and discuss the traditions of this cultural celebration.

Later in the month, our focus will be the lessons of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., including topics of justice and inclusion from the curriculum "Tapestry of Faith."

We'll also be learning new selections from our



Sabrina Cothorn, Cora Marschner and Carly Coates make decorations for the Dec. 23 holiday service after helping with the Angel Tree gift wrapping in the Religious Education room.

"Unitarian Universalist Children's Song Book." We plan to fashion instruments from recycled materials. Please bring coffee tins or other large canisters that could be used for creating drums.

My goal for the new year is to organize the toys in the playroom. We are in need of new or gently used toys such as:

- Lego blocks
- Dolls
- Building toys, blocks, magnet shapes, etc.
- Children's books
- Puzzles

- Board games and card games
- Empty plastic containers for storage

I'm looking forward to a fabulous new year with our RE group. In January, the RE committee will meet to plan upcoming events and discuss programming for our youth. Everyone is invited to attend and share ideas. Child care will be provided. The date and time will be announced soon through an email. If you cannot attend but would like to contribute to plans, please contact me with your ideas!

Tids & Bits

The crew that took down our Christmas tree and cleaned up the Sanctuary included Chelso Frescura, Tim Rooney,

Rev. Larry and Lorelei, Jay and Dick Zaker.

We think every last needle was picked up!

A big welcome to those who have joined Fellowship

UUFD continues to get bigger and better. We told you about four new members last month, and now it's our pleasure to describe four more.



Athena

Athena Pajer has a real UUFD pedigree. She's the daughter of Julie Shields, a longtime member of

the Fellowship.

She came up through the RE program and initially reconnected to assist with child care in RE. Athena is expanding her participation by helping to record some church services and working with the new Media Outreach Committee.

Athena is a sophomore at Millikin University and

president of the English Club.

Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to introduce yourself and get to know all these good people.

Lisa Coates needs less of an introduction, in that she has been leading our RE program since last summer.



Lisa

Originally from St. Louis, Lisa graduated from Webster University with a master's degree in teaching early childhood education.

Her husband is Chris Coates, editor of the Herald & Review. Their daughters are Carly, Caden and Louella.



Jen, Charlie and Tim McMillin

Jen and Tim have sons Eric and Charlie. They moved to Decatur after college.

Tim is helping with some of the Fellowship's online work, and Jen is a member of the Media Outreach Committee.

And by the way, here are photos of other new members, Jennifer Ellis and Victoria Sloan, that we didn't have in hand for last month's Newsletter.



Jennifer E.



Victoria

Our UUFD members who help direct library affairs are top shelf

On Dec. 5, Amy Stockwell was approved by the Decatur City Council to serve on the Decatur Public Library Board of Trustees. She joins UU Mark Sorensen, board president, as one of the nine trustees.

In addition, Kathy Vaught has been president of the Friends of the Decatur

Public Library support group, along with other Friends board members Tim Rooney and Darwin Shroyer.

Past Friends board member Judy Thistlethwaite and husband Vern are long-time super volunteers for the Friends and help greatly with book sales.

Young talent abounds at MacArthur and Mound



Suzanne Prange and Grace Raleigh gave those attending the Dec. 2 service a taste of the skills they have attained in the Decatur dance program. They performed as part of the “Value of Theater Arts” program, highlighted by Marie Jagger-Taylor’s talk. “Miss Marie” is the cultural arts manager for the Decatur Park District. As service leader Mark Sorensen explained, dance rarely breaks out during our services. One of the last occasions was by Grace’s mother, Jennifer. That’s Grace’s “Grampa Mark”, below, left, resplendent in red tie, flanked by Grace and Suzanne.



Our youngsters had a little surprise for us during the Dec. 23 holiday service. They turned their backs and came around with Rudolph noses. Lisa Coates arranged an entertaining performance, and we’re not even mentioning how satisfying Michael Duling’s singing and playing was.



Ash Richard gave us a moving rendition of “Greensleeves” during the holiday service. She showed such poise with what can’t be an easy piece.



Please share your birthday by Emailing newsletter@uufd.org

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|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Jen McMillin -
Jan. 7 | Hadrian Pajer -
Jan. 21 |
| Jay Zaker -
Jan. 8 | Amy Stockwell
- Jan. 22 |
| Ada Elder -
Jan. 15 | Amy Hawkins -
Jan. 27 |
| Mark Sorensen
- Jan. 20 | Mary Cleave -
Jan. 31 |
| Caius Pajer -
Jan. 21 | |

Environmental film series ready to inspire, spark discussion

The 2019 Environmental Film Series will have some changes in time and focus. It will kick off on Saturday, Jan. 26 at 10 a.m. with the film "Troubled Waters".

"The American Midwest boasts some of the world's most productive land, but this bounty comes at a price ..." "Troubled Waters" tells the story of changes on the land, and the initiatives people are taking to ensure a more sustainable food production system."

Steve John has agreed to lead discussion following.



The second film, "Looking for the Wild", will play on Saturday, Feb. 23, also in the morning. It will reflect on our focus on films of interest to children.

The film is about a 10-year-old boy who travels around the world with his family on an extraordinary journey, photographing wildlife. Jack Nuzzo will be discussion leader, and lunch will be included.

On March 9 at 10 a.m., there will be a presentation by Delores Logue: "The Ocean – Its Connection to Climate Change". A discussion and free lunch will follow. Then, at 1 p.m., the film "Chasing Coral" will be shown.

Finally, on March 23, the children's film "Princess Mononoke" will start at 10 a.m. with a break for lunch and activities for children.

It is the hope of the Green Sanctuary Committee that UU members and friends will attend and support the Environmental Film Series.

Education and gambling: UFD Humanism Group keeps learning

After taking a break in January, the group will examine gambling and not-for-profits on Feb. 6.

For example, when was the last time you bought a 50-50 ticket at the local game? How about that rousing round of bingo at the local church basement?

Where else might this risky fund-raising turn up? When does gambling become an addiction?

On Dec. 5, the group looked at the structure and effectiveness of the Illinois

education system. Jim Palmer's multi-decade career composing standardized test questions for the state made him a great leader for the talk.

What is the nature of the problems with our schools? Jim identified three aspects: the socioeconomic status of the family, the education level of the parents and the availability of reading materials in the home.

Thankfully, there might be answers. By examining the successful schools in

other countries throughout the rest of the world, it appears those schools are spending more time and effort developing curriculum at a local level.

Three common traits can be linked across successful curricula: 1) teaching content and knowledge 2) instilling perseverance and 3) working in groups with people. This can be accomplished by giving local administrators the freedom to work with the population that the administration is trying to educate.

Media Outreach group forms to expand UUFD visibility in community

Can you feel the momentum from the growing membership and energy at UUFD?

We want to build on that by reaching out more effectively to the surrounding community. The Media Outreach Committee has formed on that basis.

Decatur has many agencies, organizations and churches that are natural allies for us. We want to keep closer tabs with them to publicize activities that would be of interest to our Fellowship members.

At the same time, we want to make our presence much better known to the

community. From this, we're hoping to draw more visitors to our services and activities.

Another goal is to record more of our events to assemble an archive for future use. And, live streaming of services would be a benefit to those of our people who can't attend or others who might be curious about us.

The UUFD web site and Facebook will be put to use in this effort. The eBlast also may play a role.

Those attending the initial meeting of the committee were Rev. Larry, Nancy Hutchison, Athena Pajer, Amy Stockwell, Jen

McMillin, Tim Rooney and Dick Zaker. We'd love input from anyone, especially if you have technical expertise.

Meanwhile, we began compiling a list of community "allies", but we couldn't hope to have thought of all of them. This also is where you come in.

Send your affiliations and memberships to us so we can connect with more segments of Decatur life. This will allow us to relay information about their activities and will give us greater visibility among more of those making a difference in our community.



So, what do YOU like on your latkes? The potato pancakes were a delicacy at the Hanukkah dinner held at Temple B'nai Abraham. Rev. Larry and Nancy Hutchison attended, as did Mark and Kathy Sorensen, Barbara Hannon and Lorelei, Jay and Dick Zaker.

Wanted: regional board members

The Nominating Committee of the MidAmerica Region of the Unitarian Universalist Association is seeking candidates for the Regional Board and the Nominating Committee itself.

The Board of Trustees is responsible for governance between annual meetings of the member congregations. They serve three-year terms.

Nominations may be emailed by Jan. 7 to any of these people: Kay Slama, slama@morris.umn.edu; Bob Lovell, boblovell@comcast.net; Betty V. Holcomb, bettyvholcomb@gmail.com; or Claude Diogo, claudio_diogo@cargill.com