



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Decatur



June-July 2020 News

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



Our services: 10:15 a.m. Sundays, online

Let's decide that it takes more than a Coronavirus to break this Fellowship! Your viewing of the online services displays your commitment to all of us. Joyce Throneburg, Mark Sorensen and Dick Zaker have put forth messages so far. Continued thanks to videographer Jen McMillin. Send your announcements and Joys& Concerns by Friday each week to Jen@JenMcMillin.com or mcmillin.jen@gmail.com.

NO JULY PROGRAMS

June 7: "No Going Back" with Mary Lovell



A look at the impact of losing our comfort zones. What can we learn from the past, without trying to re-create it?

June 14: "The Sunny Side of Doubt"

with Rev. Larry Hutchison

Do we believe too much and doubt too little? Offering textures of feeling and radical shifts of meaning that expand our capacity to envision and fight for new worlds.



June 21: "A Sacred Journey"

with Farah Mahmood and Pati Ramsey



The speakers will retrace their steps to the holy city of Mecca. One of the five pillars of Islam, the Hajj pilgrimage is the largest religious gathering in the world. Pati Ramsey is a Caucasian convert to Islam, and Farah Mahmood, is a first-generation Pakistani-American.

June 28: "Magnolia Wind" with Rev. Larry Hutchison



Fond thoughts as our minister completes his service with us

"Beautiful energy" is a phrase a UUFD member attributes to Larry Hutchison. The minister's "encore performance" ends in

June, with his retirement. He and Nancy are to return to Florida, where she has children.

Larry served us from 2010 to 2014, then returned for the past two years.

Continued on Page 2

Minister's wisdom, experience lauded as an inspiration

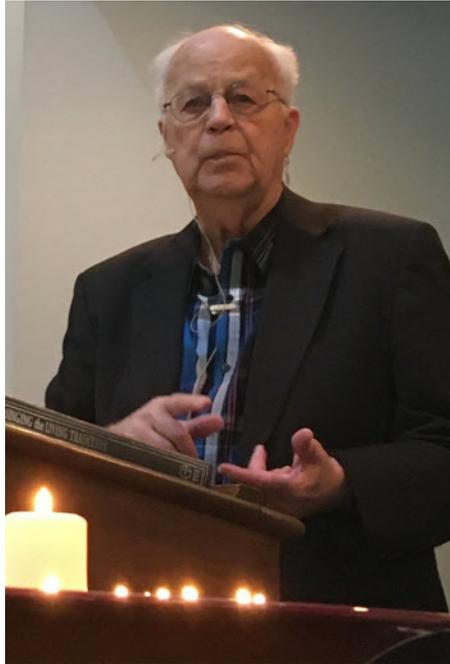
This is Barbara Hannon's tribute: "Larry Hutchison not only has a place in my heart, but he is a voice in my conscience.

I hope I have become a better person; I know I have become more aware of how far I need to go as a human being and a UU."

Leanne Mull put it this way: "Larry arrived for his second time serving at UUFD shortly before I did. I immediately knew that something great was happening here!

My first experience outside of service was an open mic, where I got to meet friends of Larry and Nancy, who had benefited from his ministry in Michigan. He made such a difference in their lives that they traveled to Decatur to share their gifts with us.

What a two years we have had under Larry's leadership! In the services, we have seen exponential growth, to the point we were parking on the grass!



In our Fellowship, we have had regular events to strengthen our relationships with each other. We have also seen countless people of all ages, identities, and race joining the church and immediately getting involved in the activities, and we cannot forget the children!

With Larry's experience and wisdom as a guide, the Religious Education program has exploded to the point that he gave up his office to provide more room – a great problem to have. He worked with Lisa to

include children in the service and with the RE committee and mentored all of us in the importance of creating a safe space for all children.

Additionally, Larry galvanized the Fellowship to become involved with many community organizations and events, attended countless meetings for the betterment of Decatur and opened the Fellowship building to groups fighting for justice for all.

Finally, Larry worked with people, people from all marginalized communities, to help them to understand that UUFD is a safe and welcoming community for all. The comments heard from newcomers to the Fellowship often include how welcome they feel, how warm everyone is at the church and how much they love it.

Beautiful energy like this was magnified because of the beautiful energy of our minister. Thank you, Larry, for your service, your lessons and your beautiful, life-affirming energy."

Find us on the Internet

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

Submit items to
eblast_mgrs@uufd.org
by Monday
of each week.

Dick Zaker is Newsletter
editor. August edition
deadline: July 25.
Newsletter@uufd.org

Naturally elegant

Take a bird-friendly environment and add a sensitive and patient photographer, and you've got winged wonders captured in the moment. Terry Ankrom provided these gorgeous views of the red-bellied woodpecker, ruby-throated hummingbird at the feeder and a catbird (we've heard of catbirds, but we hadn't seen one till now). Thank you, Terry!



You, your financial support play big role in UUFD success

Writing this at the end of May, it feels like we have been physically apart for a long time. Now we know that this situation is likely to continue for a while in some form.

We are making progress in finding ways to connect virtually, and more ideas are in the works. When you read this, you might have already participated in an after-the-service discussion which we are hoping to get in place soon. We're working on more ways to connect informally, to catch up and

care for each other. Stay tuned!

I know from all the gifts of time, treasure and spirit how much this community means, and I am committed to working with all of you to strengthen our connections.



Amy Stockwell

On to business: You'll be getting a letter shortly from your Finance Committee, asking you to make or renew your financial contribution to the Fellowship. Please carefully consider your financial situation and make

whatever commitment you can.

When we've got your information and know more about the work of the Search Committee trying to fill Larry's big shoes, we'll present a budget to the Fellowship and ask you to adopt it.

You are the foundation of UUFD, and you are the final authority on what we collectively decide to do over the coming year. Thank you for everything as we continue to strengthen our community together.

Minister candidates being evaluated by search committee

From Sara Cothorn, Ministerial Search Committee chairwoman

Beginning a new minister search this late in the year is a difficult proposition. Will there even be any candidates left?



Sara Cothorn

I am pleased to report that UUA has provided us with several good candidates! At the time of publication, we have not yet settled on a minister for the upcoming year. However, talks are ongoing with multiple candidates.

We hope to be able to update you with a new minister before the start of the 2020-2021 year. Should that not be the case, rest assured that we will continue working diligently to find the right person for our congregation. Either way, UUFD will remain a beacon of liberal religious values in Decatur and beyond.



Reluctantly, we say good-bye to Michael Duling, who has played for our services for the past several years. Michael has finished at Millikin University and has set his sights on a musical career, probably using Chicago as his launching pad. He has added so much to our Sunday morning experience: the selection of music, his skill at playing, accompanying other musicians, singing and putting up with the UUFD choir. The fact that he is a Unitarian Universalist himself must have given him an appreciation of what we've wanted from that instrument in the corner of the sanctuary. We have appreciated our pianists over the years, but Michael has been something special. He will be missed.

Focusing on RE: Welcoming summer this month

It's so very sad to me that we are concluding our year with remote learning. Teaching RE online has been an interesting journey, and I hope everyone has enjoyed the content. Fingers crossed, we can resume to normal in August.



Lisa Coates

We are currently discussing using the Zoom platform to create more interactive lessons and social gatherings. I'm looking forward to seeing our UUFD children's and families' smiling faces in any way we can!

My plans for June lessons include welcoming the summer season, exploring



our 7 principles and a special project to get to know our members better.

The plans are still being worked out, but I hope to have various members of the Fellowship showcase their interests, hobbies and talents to inspire our youth.

Please contact me if you have something you could share with our group! I'm asking folks to create a short video to share on our UUFD Families Facebook page. I would love to hear from you!



Lorelei and Dick Zaker's little girl is in the Army now! Jay Zaker will spend the summer in Basic Training at Fort Jackson, S.C. (in Columbia). In the fall, the 17-year-old will go back to Mount Zion High School for her senior year. Jay will train for one weekend a month in the Army Reserves. In the summer after that, she will return to the Army, with an emphasis on career development.

Board zooms into action with creative approaches

The UFD Board, meeting virtually for probably the first time, did this on May 16:

- Decided the next Board meeting will be 1 p.m. Saturday, June 13, on Zoom
- Speaking of Zoom, voted to spend \$780 to subscribe to the videoconferencing service for a year. The benefits will be expanded time limits for meetings and higher number of participants
- Agreed to have Amy Stockwell and Mark Sorensen conduct the pledge drive by mail. They will follow up with phone calls if pledges not received. (By the way, members and friends have been great about keeping up with their giving during this trying time.)
- Heard that Mark Sorensen will replace Vern Thistlethwaite on the Trust Board
- The new officers will be: Pat Rossiter, president; Tim McMillin, vice president; Sarah Yeagle, secretary; Amy Stockwell, treasurer; Lorelei Zaker, past president; Kim Schwarz, Barbara Hannon and Mark Sorensen, board members at large.
- Sarah Yeagle and Mary Lovell will be forming a Google group to keep contact with members and friends by email
- Joyce Throneburg needs people to help us by doing Sunday programs. Joyce.throneburg@gmail.com
- Barb Hannon, Hospitality Committee chairwoman, is looking for ways to have social gatherings via Zoom
- And, as though it's obvious Zoom figures into our future, the Program Committee is thinking about ways to have discussions after Sunday services

Keeping in contact

We've been apart long enough that we may have lost touch with some of our people. Consider using some down time to call or send a note to some of them:

Mary Jo Comerford, 37 Maple Ct., Decatur, IL 62526

Mary Cleave, Rm. 103, Primrose Retirement, 1145 W. Arbor Dr., Decatur, IL 62526

Irma Cushing, 765 Christopher Dr., Forsyth, IL 63525, 207-242-0769, gm.eun17@gmail.com

Carolynn Devore, 250 N. Woodlawn Ave., Decatur, 62522

Marge Evans, 5584 Traugher Rd., Decatur 62521



Bobbie and Willa Hartman, 1244 E. Whitmer St., Decatur, 358-2347 62521

bobbiehartman3@gmail.com

John Hays, Heritage Health, 1225

Woodland Dr., Mount Zion, 62549

Deonne Orvis, 1100 Fairview Ave., Apt. 220, Parkway Apts., Pana, 62557

John Regan, 51 Emerson Dr., Decatur, 62526

Rita Schwake, Primrose Retirement, Room 119, 1145 W. Arbor Drive, Decatur, 62526, 791-6605

Darwin Shroyer, 25 Forest Knolls Estate, Decatur, 62521, 429-7776, 433-3855

Library still serving

The Decatur Public Library has yet to reopen its doors, but is offering several online opportunities for people. Consult their website for more details.

For example, the Local History Department has developed some interesting online displays (www.decaturlibrary.org/local-history-display-spanish-flu),



including resources about the 1918 pandemic in America and Decatur's response.

Notes

UUFD member Jen McMillin is running for the Macon County Board in District 5.

Contact: JenMcMillin.com and click on #Jen4MaconCo.

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The Illinois State Museum is seeking stories about the experiences of Illinoisans about the COVID-19 ordeal.

<http://illinoisstatemuseum.org/share-covid-19-story>

So sorry to hear of the passing of Marge Evans' grandson, Daniel Hayman Evans, of Springfield on May 2.



No crush of activities – yet – but eBlasts and Facebook will pass along any dates and times for meetings.

- Suzanne Prange - June 13
- Emily Steele - June 18
- Elizabeth Jeffery - June 20



- Leanne Mull - July 4
- Jennifer Sekosky - July 20
- John Hays - July 21
- Al Brumett - July 31