



# The Pathfinder



A Publication of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of DeKalb

Volume 59, Issue 6

158 N. Fourth St.

DeKalb, IL 60115

Dec. 2018—Jan. 2019

## OUR MISSION

*Together as a religious community, we put our liberal faith in action, striving to nurture our families and our spiritual lives, protect the earth, eliminate poverty, and stop oppression, while offering love and hope for all.*

*(UUFDF mission statement adopted May 17, 2009)*

### DEADLINE

The deadline for the February/March edition of the Pathfinder is **January 20**. Please note that this is the third Sunday of the month. Submissions are to be sent to the church office via email: [office@uufdekalb.org](mailto:office@uufdekalb.org) or hard copy left in the Office Manager's mailbox in the library.

## Sunday Services: Service 10:00 A.M. till 11:15 A.M.

### December Theme: Peace

John F. Kennedy wrote, "Peace is a daily, a weekly, a monthly process, gradually changing opinions, slowly eroding old barriers, quietly building new structures. And however undramatic the pursuit of peace, the pursuit must go on." The process of peace is both an inward pursuit as well as an external commitment. Peace, as Thich Nhat Hanh said, is every step.

#### December 2 – *Seeking Peace*

Maylan Dunn-Kenney, Worship Leader  
Jack Lazzara, Assistant

#### December 9 – *A Celebration of Hanukkah*

Diane Johns, Worship Leader  
Dorothy Coleman, Assistant

#### December 16 – *...And Let It Begin with Me*

Elisa Woodruff, Worship Leader  
Vanstrom Dracul, Assistant

#### December 21 – *The Longest Night: Blue Christmas Service*

\* 7 p.m.

Rev. Jenn, Worship Leader  
Vanstrom Dracul, Assistant

#### December 23 – *The Dawn Draws Near*

Rev. Jenn, Worship Leader

#### December 24 – *Christmas Eve Service*

\* 2 p.m. (Note new time)

Ed Miguel, Worship Leader

### January Theme: Grace

Grace is a gift that comes to us unexpected and unbidden. It is the gift of life itself as well as the surprising gifts that bless our lives. Perhaps Mary Oliver's approach is best. She writes, "You can have the other words—chance, luck, coincidence, serendipity. I'll take grace. I don't know what it is exactly, but I'll take it."

#### January 6 –

Jack Lazzara, Worship Leader  
Madeline DiNatale, Assistant

#### January 13 –

Elisa Woodruff, Worship Leader  
Dorothy Coleman, Assistant

#### January 20 – *Without Reservation*

Rev. Jenn, Worship Leader  
Vanstrom Dracul, Assistant  
*What does grace look like in our lives? Can we offer grace to others? Can how we receive a gift of grace? How does grace change things?*

#### January 27 –

Maylan Dunn-Kenney, Worship Leader  
Diane Johns, Assistant

### CONTACTS:

INTERIM MINISTER: Rev. Jennifer Gracen ([minister@uufdekalb.org](mailto:minister@uufdekalb.org), 815-408-1079)

OFFICE MANAGER: Kathryn Jones

MUSIC DIRECTOR: Bonnie Anderson

PRESIDENT: Laura Gillberg

TREASURER: Kristina Olsen

Office Manager Office Hours: Wed 9 - 2 and Fri 10 - 3

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Web site: [uufdekalb.org](http://uufdekalb.org)

*In case of an emergency, call Rev. Gracen, the Board President Laura Gillberg, or the President Elect Jenny Stamatakos.*

## Gray Areas: Thoughts from the Minister

As we move into the Advent season, we are waiting for the birth – the birth of hope, the birth of love, the birth of justice and peace. The season marks the miracle of possibility, the miracle that is the birth of every child.

The story of the birth of Jesus tells us that, almost from his birth, Jesus and his family were in danger. Shortly after he was born, this young family fled to a new land to keep their baby safe.

As I consider this story and our next two congregational themes of “peace” and “grace” my mind and heart are drawn to the southern border of our country. Entering the Christmas season, we are faced with thousands of people fleeing danger, fleeing death, families searching for a way to protect their children. Having lived in unstable, dangerous conditions in their home, they crossed countries to reach the land that has been known as a new home for refugees and wanderers.

We have presented these seekers of freedom and safety with tear gas and separation. We have threatened the asylum seekers with weapons and prison. We have, for months, been ripping children from their families and putting them in situations sometimes proven and often suspected to be unsafe.

In this time of preparation and reflection before the Christmas celebration, what does it mean if we see more of our country in the story

of Harrod than in the story of Jesus and his family?

As we wait for the birth of hope, of love, of justice and peace, how can we reclaim the miracle of the season?

What would it have meant if we had been waiting for the migrants at the border, not with tear gas, but with food and blankets, with translators and lawyers to help the process of seeking asylum begin?

What are we waiting for?

Blessed Be,

*Rev. Jennifer Gracen*



### UUFDF Staff News

#### Rev. Jenn's schedule

- In December, Rev. Jenn will be here December 15 and 16 and December 21<sup>st</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> (note this is Friday and Sunday)
- In January, Rev. Jenn will be here January 19 and 20 and 26 and 27.
- Rev. Jenn encourages you to reach out to her if you'd like to meet or talk by phone. Her phone number is 815-408-1079.

- Office manager Kathryn Jones's hours are Wed 9 - 2 and Fri 10 - 3.
- If you haven't met Kathryn yet, please stop by and say hello!



## Mark Your Calendar For These UUFD Events



### December

- December 1 – Winter Market and Book Sale 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.  
 December 2 – Buddhist Study Group & Meditation 11:45 a.m. – 1:15 p.m. (1st and 3rd Sundays)  
 December 5 – Yoga with Ed Miguel 5:30 p.m. (Every Wednesday)  
 December 6 – Enlightenment Study Group 6 – 7:30 p.m. (Every Thursday)  
 December 7 – Restorative Meditation 5:30 p.m. (Every Friday)  
 December 7 – Winter Solstice Ritual with University Student Pagans 7 p.m. (All are welcome!)  
 December 9 – Social Justice Committee Meeting at coffee hour  
 December 9 – Grief Group noon  
 December 9 – Wiccan Study Group noon (2nd and 4th Sundays)  
 December 9 – Ordinary Folk Musical Gathering (2nd and 4th Sundays)  
 December 16 – Cook Decorating at coffee hour  
 December 18 – Hope Haven Meal 6:30 p.m.

### January

- January 15 – Hope Haven Meal 6:30 p.m.  
 January 26 – UUFD Welcome Essentials Pantry 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

**Save the date for UU Winter Markets!** They will take place on Saturdays, **December 1 and February 9**. Please drop off your books for the book sale. Contact Dan Kenney if you'd like to volunteer.

## Moments of Grace

Grace is not a common term in Unitarian Universalist religious language given its traditional relationship to the divine, as a gift from God. We might better understand it as a gift from Being itself, as an experience in which we are moved in unexpected and profound ways. And thus, we may experience grace in the beauty of nature, or the transcending magnificence of music. It can be the physical exhilaration of the athlete as he or she suddenly finds the zone where effort becomes effortless. Basketball legend Patsy Neal found it and witnessed it in basketball. She wrote about this in her 1972 book, *Sport and Identity*.

“There are moments of glory that go beyond the human expectation, beyond the physical and emotional ability of an individual. Something unexplainable takes over and breathes life into the known life. One stands on the threshold of miracles that one cannot create voluntarily.... Call it a state of grace, or an act of faith ... or an act of God. It is there, and the impossible becomes possible.... The athlete goes beyond herself; she transcends the natural. She touches a piece of heaven and becomes the recipient of power from an unknown source.

“The power goes beyond that which can be defined as physical or mental. The performance almost becomes a holy place, where a spiritual awakening seems to take place. The individual becomes swept up in the action around her—she almost floats through the performance, drawing on forces she has never previously been aware of.”

There are many ways to explain grace, and Neal's is especially compelling.

\*\* This is an excerpt from the January Touchstones Journal by Rev. Kirk Loadman-Copeland

To see the full journal for the current month, visit [uufdekalb.org/touchstones](http://uufdekalb.org/touchstones) or pick up a hard copy on the table next to the magazine rack inside the front entrance.

# JOYS & SORROWS



We are delighted to welcome our new office manager, Kathryn Jones. She is doing a great job with this tricky, eclectic position. We've even heard that her bookkeeping skills pass muster with Kathy Clark, which is high praise, indeed.



We'd like to offer a huge "thank you" to everyone who helped out with the November UUFDF Welcome Essentials Pantry. Thanks to Florence and Peter Gerlach, Dawn Aumann, Eric Weyenberg, Kendra Aumann-Weyenberg, Bonnie Anderson, Marisol Cervantes, Maylan Dunn-Kenney, Kriss Olsen, Ed Wilcox, Laura Heide-man, Lynn McCanne, Tom McCanne, Julio Hernandez, Beth Schewe, and Shane Sharp for pantry shopping, advanced preparation of the bags and/or help on the day of the pantry. As you can see, this is a long list! It takes a lot of people to make this ministry possible, and we are truly grateful.

*Do you have a joy, sorrow, or milestone to share with the congregation?  
Contact the church office and we will share it in the eNews and Pathfinder.*

## **The worship theme for December is Peace; for January the theme is Grace.**

The worship leaders will use these themes to guide their services throughout the month. We encourage you to take a look at the Touchstones Journal on our website at [uufdekalb.org/touchstones](http://uufdekalb.org/touchstones) (or pick up a copy at the table by the magazine rack) and hope it will lead to deeper discussions!

## ***Touchstones for Peacemaking* by Rev. Samuel A. Trumbore**

\* This is an article from the December *Touchstones Journal*

I suggest six touchstones for personal ...peacemaking, a synthesis of ...my inner and outer exploration of this subject:

1. The most important first step is the decision to choose nonviolence as the primary principle of how you will live in the world. This isn't a decision made once, but a commitment returned to and renewed again and again. It is a faith commitment because the world ...will urge you to fear, hate, and strike out again and again. ...
  2. To be a peacemaker, one must develop the capacity to be aware of the urge to be violent and develop the capacity to restrain the impulse. This exercise in self-awareness requires ...us to accurately view our inner emotional landscape. ...
  3. The most powerful antidote to the urge to violence is the felt experience of compassion. Almost all of us can expand our capacity to feel compassion for others and even to care for our enemies. ...Access to compassion is crucial for just actions.
  4. Act from love and care not hate and fear. Almost always, it is better to do nothing at all than to do something harmful. ...
  5. Respect your own limits and the limits of others. ...Setting and respecting boundaries are a very important part of preventing violence in human relationships.
  6. Sometimes force is necessary. ...Like the Samurai who will not strike in anger, wise use of force requires enormous inner reserves of peace.
- Go in peace. Make peace. Be at peace.

## Season's Greetings from the Social Justice Committee

The Social Justice Committee wishes all UUFD members and friends Happy Holidays!

In celebration of the spirit of giving during the winter season, we extend our thanks to all of you who have made a gift of your time, labor, and funds to help us achieve our social justice goals throughout the year. You know who you are: You who have staffed and stocked our Welcome Essentials Pantry; contributed to the monthly Hope Haven meals; donated to the UUFD collection for UUSC/Guest At Your Table; participated in the annual Sondra King Memorial CROP Hunger Walk; delivered social justice candle joys and concerns during Sunday services; donated to one or more of our congregation's nine Special Collections; participated or coordinated educational events on topics of social justice, peace, and the environment; helped with our Farmers' Markets and Rummage Sales; and staffed or contributed to our Fair Trade coffee stand in our Fellowship Hall. It takes more than a committee to do all these things-- it takes a Fellowship!

We also thank the more than 50 UUFD members and friends who have done one or more of the UUANI "Actions of the Week." During his visit with our congregation on November 18, Rev. Scott Aaseng, the Executive Director of the Unitarian Universalist Action Network of Illinois, congratulated us for being among the top three congregations in Illinois, proportional to our size, for responding to UUANI's weekly calls to action. Great work, fellow UUFDers!

We had a great meeting last Sunday with the Rev. Aaseng. We'll go over it with you at our next meeting, Sunday Dec. 9 (Second Sunday), at the Fellowship after coffee hour. Second Sunday will be our regular meeting time from now on, pending approval of the full committee.

Scott posts an "Action of the Week" on the website, <http://www.uuani.org>, and you can sign up there to receive the weekly newsletter. Highly recommended! Also the UUANI Facebook page: [https://www\(dot\)facebook\(dot\)com/UUANI](https://www(dot)facebook(dot)com/UUANI)

Any questions? Email or phone Jack Reich [humanist7@yahoo.com](mailto:humanist7@yahoo.com) 815-909-0436 or Dorothy Coleman 815-901-4332 [dcoleman405@gmail.com](mailto:dcoleman405@gmail.com).

And don't forget - the Beloved Community monthly potluck will be on the Second Sunday in December (not the usual third Sunday), Dec. 9, 5pm, place TBA. PUT IT ON YOUR CALENDAR. We need to boost attendance!

## A Big Thank You for UUFD greeting and coffee hour volunteers!

Thank you so much to all of you who help our Sunday services run smoothly by greeting and those of you who give of your time and resources to make Fellowship Hour such a warm, welcoming and delicious time of the week for all of us.

Our October and November volunteers for greeting were, Sumiko Keay, Virginia Wilcox, Carey Boehmer, Deb Banke, Donna Veeneman, Danica Lovings, Wayne and Betty Albrecht, Jack Reich, Eric Weyenberg and Dawn Aumann

Our coffee hour hosts were Nicole Berns and Shane Diebel, Beth Schewe, Bonnie Anderson, Sharon Blake, Florence Gerlach, Kim Myers, Elisa woodruff, and Donna Veeneman.

Many of these fine folks have been greeter and/or coffee hour hosts more than one time in the last 3 months. Please consider donating some of your time on Sunday mornings! Thank you.

Dates still open for coffee hour hosting are December 23, and 30 as well as all January dates are still open. We still have opening for greeters for the dates mentioned above and we can always use a second person for any date for greeting...it keeps us all safer and keeps the service running more smoothly with 2 greeters. If you would like to volunteer please contact Sharon Blake, 815-757-2444 or [sblake202@gmail.com](mailto:sblake202@gmail.com).



**Happy holidays from UUFDF!**  
**Join us for a series of holiday services and celebrations.**

**December 7 at 7 p.m. — *Winter Solstice Ritual* with University Student Pagans**

The University Student Pagans will be doing a solstice ritual, and all are invited! Jack Lazzara will be performing the ritual. Ritual from 7 to 8 p.m. followed by potluck from 8 to 9 p.m.

**December 9 (10 a.m. Sunday Worship) — *A Celebration of Hanukkah* with worship leader Diane Johns**

**December 21 at 7 p.m. — *The Longest Night: Blue Christmas Service* with worship leader Rev. Jenn**

In this season of celebration and light some of us find ourselves experiencing the dark more acutely due to loss, fear or anxiety. Join us for a contemplative service that honors the complex emotions that can arise around the holidays.

**December 23 (10 a.m. Sunday Worship) — *The Dawn Draws Near* with worship leader Rev. Jenn Gracen**

The story of Christmas is a story of a baby whose parents waited eagerly for his birth. You all know the story of who he became when he grew up. But before any of that happened his parents fled their home to save his life, to protect this child they loved. Life as a refugee family wasn't easy.

**December 24 at 2 p.m. — *Christmas Eve Service* with worship leader Ed Miguel**

Join us for our yearly Christmas Eve service! Please note the new time.