



# The Pathfinder



A Publication of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of DeKalb

Volume 57, Issue 7

158 N. Fourth St.

DeKalb, IL 60115

Dec. 2016/Jan. 2017

## 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.*

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

### DEADLINE

The deadline for the February/March edition of the Pathfinder is **January 15, 2017**. 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 Pathfinder editor mailbox in the library.

### THE PATHFINDER CONTACT INFO

Editor: Melissa Blake  
Phone: 757-3131  
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## Sunday Services: Service 10:00 A.M. till 11:15 A.M.

### December Theme: What does it mean to be a community of Presence?

Spiritually, presence can mean two radically different things. One the one hand, contemplatives talk of "being present." Presence from this perspective is all about awareness and remembering to "live in the moment." On the other hand, theologians tend to come at presence from the perspective of "otherness." Their concern is not just that we pay attention to the present moment, but that we notice a transcendent Presence that is woven through all moments. This month, we refuse to take sides.

#### December 4

Maylan Dunn-Kenney, Worship Leader  
Ed Miguel, Assistant

*Sermon: Waiting in the Now*

#### December 11

Rev. Linda Slabon, Worship Leader  
Forrest Brandon, Assistant

**\*\*Intergenerational Service: "Spirit of the Christmas Tree"**

*Our children, congregation and choir sing together and experience the Christian nativity story from a UU perspective in this musical pageant by composer Joyce Poley.*

#### December 18

Rev. Linda, Worship Leader  
Susan Dorbeck, Assistant

*Sermon: Need for Presence*



**\*\*Saturday, December 24 – 4 p.m.**

*A Christmas Eve service of carols, readings, and candlelight.*

**Rev. Linda, Worship Leader  
Dave Becker, Assistant**

#### December 25

Rev Linda, Worship Leader  
Irene Faivre, Assistant

*Sermon: The Gift of Church Family*

**\*\*A brief service followed by hot cocoa and treats.**

#### January Theme: What does it mean to be a community of Prophecy?

Prophets are known for their condemnation. Images of an angry bearded man shouting and predicting God's judgment come to mind. But for Unitarian Universalists, the prophetic voice has always been less about shouting "You're evil!" and more about pointing out "We're all asleep!" The prophetic message, for us, is not so much "Repent!" but "Wake up!"

#### January 1

Intern Minister Allen Harden, Worship Leader  
Sue Willis, Assistant

*Sermon: With Heart and Hope May We Prophesy*

#### January 8

Ed Miguel, Worship Leader  
Forrest Brandon, Assistant

*Sermon: TBA*

#### January 15

Susan Dorbeck, Worship Leader  
Maylan Dunn-Kenney, Assistant

*Sermon: Prophetic Vision, Prophetic Voice, Prophetic Action*

#### January 22

Rev. Linda, Worship Leader  
Maylan Dunn-Kenney, Assistant

*Sermon: Riding the Wave*

#### January 29

Rev. Linda, Worship Leader  
Intern Minister Allen Harden, Assistant

*Sermon: When Love is Holy*

### CONTACTS:

MINISTER: Rev. Linda Slabon

OFFICE MANAGER: Beth Schewe

MUSIC DIRECTOR: Toni Tollerud

PRESIDENT: Bill Lamb

TREASURER: Lon Clark

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CHAIR: Gladys Sanchez

Minister's Office Hours: Tuesday/Friday by appointment

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

Church Office phone number: 815-756-7089

email: [office@uufdekalb.org](mailto:office@uufdekalb.org)

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

*In case of an emergency, call Rev. Slabon at 815-501-4788, the Board President Bill Lamb or the Past President Ashley Ford.*

## Minister's Musings

As I see it, there are two major and significant issues facing UUFD in the coming months:

### #1. THE BUILDING OUR FUTURE CAMPAIGN

### #2. SHOULD UUFD MAKE A PUBLIC RECOGNITION OF BLACK LIVES MATTER?

#### The Building Our Future Campaign

When Helen and Vern Sherbenou, founders of this congregation, contributed over \$70,000 to UUFD, I was strikingly aware that we were entrusted with a legacy to ensure liberal religion would thrive in DeKalb. Their gift paid off the mortgage on the building. **THIS CONGREGATION HAS NO MORTGAGE!** That gift said, "Be free from debt and now DO the work of a committed faith. BE a voice for liberal ethics and values. TEACH as sacred the inherent worth and dignity of every person, the democratic process, and peace, justice and compassion in human relations. BUILD a sanctuary for the oppressed and marginalized – from atheists to Muslims, from immigrants to persons who are LGBTQIA, from those with disabilities to

those living in poverty.

When Helen and Vern Sherbenou **entrusted** us with funds for the future and we have benefitted from their hope and generosity. UUFD is a congregational community charged to live a mission in this world. As Toni and I considered what our gift to the UUFD Building Our Future Campaign would be, we trust that our contribution will DO, BE, TEACH, and BUILD a future for UUFD. Toni and I have committed \$12,000 over the three years designated for the campaign. Of those who gave during our "silent part of the campaign," some gave more, some less. ALL who give are investing in UUFD's future. NOW IT IS UP TO YOU.

At the November 13 Congregational Meeting, we reported that commitments in the amount of \$59,805 have already been received. Over the next 4 months we seek your commitment. BOF letters will go out soon to all, and the BOF team (Wayne, Ed, Mike, Beau, and Jack) will be contacting you. We hope that every member and friend will do their best to give sacrificially. Commit-

ment forms are available from the church office. Beth can send or email you one.

The BOF Campaign will end on March 31, 2017. We ask that your 3 year commitments are paid as follows: YEAR 1 = June 1, 2017 to May 31, 2018. YEAR 2 = June 1, 2018 to May 31, 2019. YEAR 3 = June 1, 2019 to May 31, 2020. It is no secret that liberal churches are struggling to survive. UUFD's Building Our Future campaign asks you to DO, BE, TEACH, and BUILD up our liberal faith community.

#### SHOULD UUFD MAKE A PUBLIC RECOGNITION OF BLACK LIVES MATTER?

On Sunday, November 20 over 30 UUFD members and friends gathered to discuss if UUFD should put up a sign or banner or something that conveys support for "Black Lives Matter." All of us who took part in the discussion are seeking how we might best live – in these times – in response to our mission statement: "Together as a religious community we put our liberal faith in action, striving to...eliminate poverty and stop oppression, while of-

fering love and hope for all." I am grateful for the presence of many voices at the discussion and the integrity of all who shared. I am grateful to Allen Harden, our Intern Minister, who led the discussion and held safe-enough space. I am grateful for the varied opinions -- yes, even those that challenged mine. We have walked different paths and we each must listen with humility.

In the weeks ahead we will post links, articles and materials on Black Lives Matter on our UUFD sites and the e-news. You can always go to [www.uua.org](http://www.uua.org) or [www.standingonthesideoflove.org](http://www.standingonthesideoflove.org) and search Black Lives Matter. We hope you will study the issue. The UUFD Board of Trustees will consider the discussion that was held and determine next steps. We may offer a vote or straw poll with options and invite your input. Together let us DO, BE, TEACH, and BUILD with respect and love.

In the Spirit of Life,



### UUFD Staff News

- Rev. Linda and Toni will be on vacation from Thursday, December 29 through Tuesday, January 17. In case of need or an emergency, please contact a member of the UUFD Board of Trustees or Beth at the Church Office.
- Church Office hours will be shortened on Fridays December 23 and 30. Watch the upcoming eNews for details.
- Rev. Linda's hours are by appointment. Please call 815-501-4788.
- Office manager Beth Schewe's hours are Wed 9 - 2 and Fri 10 - 3.



## Mark Your Calendar For These UUFD Events



### December

2	Restorative Meditation (Every Friday)	5:30 p.m.
4	Leadership Council Meeting	Noon to 1:30 p.m.
4	Buddhist Study Group and Meditation (1 <sup>st</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sundays)	Noon to 1:30 p.m.
4	Yoga with Ed Miguel (Every Sunday)	5 to 6:30 p.m.
5	WomanSpirit Local Team Meeting (Library)	7 p.m.
7	Yoga with Ed Miguel (Every Wednesday)	6:30 to 8 p.m.
7	UUFD Board Meeting	7:30 p.m.
10	UUFD Winter Farmers' Market with Crafts	9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
11	Nontheist Discussion Group (2 <sup>nd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> Sundays)	Noon
11	Wiccan Study Group (2 <sup>nd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> Sundays)	Noon
11	Ordinary Folk Musical Gathering (2 <sup>nd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> Sundays)	2 to 3:30 p.m.
14	Retired Old Lady Holiday Sing-a-long	1 p.m.
14	Stitch and Witch	7:30 to 9 p.m.
16	Womyn's Spirituality Group @ Rev. Linda's (Bring your winter spirits!)	7 to 9 p.m.
18	Bridgers and Coming of Agers Meeting (Library)	3 to 5 p.m.
20	Choir Rehearsal (UUFD) @ 6 p.m. Holiday Party hosted by Toni & Rev. Linda at 1622 Carlisle @ 7:30 p.m.	
24	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service	4 p.m.
24	Christmas Eve Open House @ Rev. Linda & Toni's	6 to 10 p.m.
31	Welcome Essentials Pantry	10 a.m. to Noon

### January

4	UUFD Board Meeting	7:30 p.m.
11	Stitch and Witch	7:30 to 9 p.m.
20	Womyn's Spirituality Group @ 1622 Carlisle	7 to 9 p.m.
22	Social Justice Ministry Meeting with Rev. Scott Aaseng	1 to 3 p.m.
22	Bridgers and Coming of Agers (Library). Pizza night/Interview Discussion	4 to 6 p.m.
28	Welcome Essentials Pantry	10 a.m. to Noon

## Come to This year's Winter Farmers' Markets

**WHEN: Saturdays December 10, February 11, and March 18.**  
**TIME: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

Assistance is needed with set-up for market and book sale late afternoon the Friday before, and clean-up between 3 and 4 after the market closes. People are needed during the sale to person the UUFD Social Justice table, take money at the two doors, food/coffee serving area, and with the book sale. Usually 2 hour shifts.

If you are willing and able to lend some assistance for any of the above, please contact Dan Kenney, [dkenney53@hotmail.com](mailto:dkenney53@hotmail.com), or call 815-793-0950.

*Together we can have fun, raise funds for our congregational home and provide a great event for our wider community. Come out and join in — what a great way to celebrate winter!*

**UU Holiday Winter Market**  
 Saturday December 10, 2016 at 9am-3pm  
 at Unitarian Universalist of DeKalb  
 158 North Fourth Street

**Wisconsin Cheese and Farm Fresh Eggs**  
**German and French Bakery Items • Local Honey**  
**Grass Fed and Hormone Free Beef, Poultry, and Pork**

**Live Music**  **Artisan Gift Market**

Hot Soup and Bread, Coffee, Tea, and Baked Goods  
 The best rare, used, and collectible book sale in DeKalb County  
 \$1.00 Admission  
 For More information call Dan at 815-793-0950

# JOYS & SORROWS



Jim Dye, beloved husband of UUFD member Dorothy Coleman, died early the morning of October 30th. He and Dorothy bravely dealt with his cancer symptoms and treatments since his diagnosis in October 2015. He died peacefully at home with Dorothy and their daughters, Melissa and Alex, at his side. He was 81 years old. The family held a private burial at Fairview Cemetery in DeKalb on Tuesday. A public memorial event to celebrate Jim's life is being planned for sometime in the future. Dorothy welcomes visits and phone calls from her UUFD friends. If you would like to pay a visit to Dorothy, please call ahead. Her number is 815-901-4332. Thank you.



Some people of color, Muslims, immigrants, LGBT people, people who are disabled, women and others are experiencing terror, bullying and attack from those who have been emboldened. We at UUFD will work to stand on the side of love and voice our solidarity with those who are marginalized and oppressed ([www.standingonthesideoflove.org](http://www.standingonthesideoflove.org)).



Thank you to the DeKalb Festival Chorus as well as Bread and Roses, Harambee Percussion Ensemble and Underground Kpanlogo Band for lifting our spirits this past week with the beauty of music and for building community in difficult times.

## A Message From Member Care! (Congregational Support and Development)

As the year winds down, Member Care wants to be sure and thank all our service support volunteers. We are lucky to have people who volunteer their time and talents to make our Sunday services go so smoothly. Our volunteers for November and December were as follows....

Greeters: Clark Neher (2 times!), Tom and Jenny Stamatakos (2 times!), Beau Anderson (2 times!), Cathy Schneider, Debby Banke, Sharon Blake

Coffee hour hosts: Mary VonZellen (many times!), Jenny and Tom, Nicole Berns and Shane Diebal, Annemarie and Michael Clifford, Irene Faivre, Chris Miguel, Cathy Schneider, Sharon Blake and Vanstrom Dracul.

So, as you can see, we have many of the same folks doing these jobs over and over. We may be a small congregation, but we have plenty of people to go around to do this important work! Please consider volunteering your time for at least 1 slot for the spring semester. Brief training can be provided and it's an easy and fun way to talk with people while performing a valuable service to our congregation!

On January 8, Member Care is going to offer a brief (very brief) overview of coffee hour and greeting protocol here at UUFD. Please plan to attend!

We really hope many people will volunteer their time in this vital service to our Fellowship! Thanks!

## COOKIE EXCHANGE TIME!!!!

After the service on Sunday, December 11, Member Care is hosting the UUFD Annual Cookie Exchange!! Come one, come all, to gather some holiday treats! It's simple to participate....bring 2-3 dozen cookies or any holiday treat, and feel free to go through the line and take some new and exciting baked goods home with you!

There will also be an opportunity for the kids, and the kids at heart, to decorate a cookie of their own. Please join us as we celebrate the spirit of the winter holidays with each other at UUFD!



## BOOK TALK

### UUFd Librarian and Archivist Beau Anderson

Within Celtic tradition is *The Celtic Book of the Dead*. The Celts did not have books but a vibrant oral tradition preserved by poets, story-tellers and druids who regulated and enriched society by recitation of traditional lore in the form of stories. One collection of these spiritual stories was called *immrama*, meaning “mystical voyages.” At least four complete sets of these stories remain. The most famous immram is the *Voyage of St. Brendan*, which describes Irish saint’s journeys by means of a skin boat to the Isles of the West. The *Voyage of St. Brendan* enjoyed great popularity in Europe.

Both Tibet and Egypt have their books of the dead, that is, accounts of the states to be encountered after death. These texts were intended to be read to or by the person, while alive, in preparation for the journey to come. At the moment of death, the soul was thus prepared for what would happen to it. The Christian world has had its own book of the dead since the fourteenth century, when Dante Alighieri’s *Divine Comedy* was written. This book takes the reader on a journey through purgatory, hell, and heaven: three possible destinations of the soul after death. The Celtic Otherworld was believed to have a reality contiguous to and sometimes overlapping ordinary reality. The Celts had no heaven or hell. In theory, anyone could reach the Otherworld.

While these immrama spiritual stories are in book form, one’s voyage is guided by cards similar in size to ordinary playing cards. Thirty-three immram cards help guide one’s voyage, for example, the Island of Giant Ants, with meaning that your worst fears are realized, but by facing fear you partially overcome it. There are nine additional cards with images, for example, an apple, a Celtic symbol of wholeness and healing.

The Immrama Deck is intended to be a companion and guide through the shoals of life. By asking the cards and plotting the pattern of our voyage according to the nine realms or stages of the journey as shown on the reading cloth, you can begin to discover the answers which have been lying within you waiting to be discovered.

The final part of the book will provide instruction for the Immrama reading method, choosing a guide, meanings and order of the realms, charting a voyage, embarking upon your journey, and other. While *The Celtic Book of the Dead* is not light reading and would require a strong commitment to chart a journey, it is a fascinating read. The book, cards, and reading cloth are all boxed together and placed on the library shelves in the religion section. There are two checkout cards, one for the book and one for the cards and cloth.

*\*\*Disclaimer: This was my first introduction to The Book of the Dead. Most of the above text was condensed and copied from the book itself.*

### 3rd Annual Mid-Winter Western Crescent Workshop: Religious Education and Social Justice in Our (Dis)connected World

#### Reaching Beyond: RE & Social Justice Workshop in Palatine IL

SATURDAY, JANUARY 28, 2017 10:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

**Fees:** \$20/person Register by: January 23, 2017

**Location** Countryside UU Church, 1025 N Smith St, Palatine, IL 60067

**Contact** Matthew Johnson, minister@uurockford.org

For: Ministers, Religious Educators, Religious Education teams, Social Justice teams, Board members.

**Open for registration:** <https://www.midamericauua.org/events/calendar2/eventdetail/640/-/reaching-beyond-workshop-in-palatine-il>

#### Theme speakers

RE track: **Karen Bellavance-Grace**. Regional Staff for the New England Region (with a focus on small congregations and collaboration), Karen is also the previous Director of Faith Formation and the author of Full Week Faith, which proposes a new approach to our ministries of faith formation in response to the social, demographic, technological, and spiritual realities of 21st century America. Full Week Faith has taken on a life of its own, with a number of congregations across the country adapting their religious education and faith formation ministries, and several seminaries include Full Week Faith in their religious education classes for ministers in formation.

Social Justice Track: **Scott Aaseng**, Executive Director of Unitarian Universalist Action Network of Illinois and **Nancy Combs-Morgan**, MidAmerica Regional Staff. Scott and Nancy have been leading congregations in Social Justice Empowerment workshops, to help congregations reimagine their work in sustainable, connected, and effective ways.

## Saying Goodbye: Memories of Rev. Linda and Toni

*As we prepare to bid farewell to Rev. Linda and Toni – who are retiring in summer 2017 – our UUA consultant has reminded us that one of our important duties as a congregation is to “say goodbye well.” To that end we will dedicate a portion of each Pathfinder over the next year to stories and memories of Rev. Linda and Toni.*

*To Rev. Linda and Toni: Surprise! With sincere gratitude and affection, we say “thank you” for your many years of service to UUFD.*

### From Donna Veeneman

As I was thinking back over the years that I have been at UUFD and about some really nice times I have had with Rev. Linda & Toni, the Women’s Retreats came to mind. I attended several of them at their home which is always so warm and welcoming. I think that those times spent together sharing with other women our hopes, dreams, experiences, vulnerabilities, joys and life experiences was probably some of the best memories I have of them both. I got to know them a lot better in that relaxed environment. We had a lot of fun; we shared some really great conversations and made lots of meaningful art objects. I loved making my soul card. I treasure it to this day and have shared it with my friends and used it last week as my “show & tell” at the Rolers (Retired Old Ladies group) meeting.

I also remember that February in 2003 when Steve & I first attended UUFD. I was looking for a supportive community as I was going through one of the hardest years of my life. Our only child, Drew had just been shipped to Iraq and I needed people who could understand our pain. Steve & I were struggling with our despair over a war we deplored and having our son involved in the middle of it. As I nervously went forward that morning during the joys & concerns part of the worship service I felt so embraced by the congregation, Rev. Linda who came up and put her arm around me (I didn’t know the 3 min. rule because I was brand new, but I did feel her genuine caring), Toni who rang the chime and whoever lit that candle. I was deeply touched... thank you so much for opening your hearts to us and giving your warm support.

There are too many instances to list here — the thorough training I received as a worship associate, the great planning that Rev. Linda always put into the covenant and other study groups, and so much more. Thanks for all the good that you have brought into my life!

Best wishes on your new journey!

*\*\*We welcome your contributions! If you have a memory of Rev. Linda or Toni you’d like to share in an upcoming issue of the Pathfinder, please contact Beth in the church office.*

# UU Christmas Pageant



*It is an exciting time of the year! Our UU church will have an awesome Christmas Pageant.*

**Date: Sunday, December 11**  
**Time: Dress rehearsal- 9:00am**  
**Church service- 10:00am**

**Friday, December 9 - Official dress rehearsal (potluck and rehearsal)**

**Call or text Gladys: 708.710.0684 if you want to be involved!**



## **Building Our Future Campaign Update**

### **How do we ensure the continued health and viability of UUFD?**

At our recent congregational meeting we invited you – UUFD members, friends, and supporters – to contribute to the UUFD Building Our Future campaign. This is different from your annual pledge, which supports the day-to-day operations of the church. Your contributions to this campaign, by contrast, will ensure that UUFD continues to thrive in the future.

**Priorities:**

- Renovate the RE Rooms, Fellowship Hall, and Kitchen
- Create a bridge fund to help us raise staff salaries to fair levels over a five-year period
- Start a reserve fund to help us weather emergencies.

**We are thrilled to announce that we have already received commitments totaling \$59,805.**

Will you add your commitment to support UUFD’s future growth, helping to make a positive difference for ourselves and our community, and build a lasting Unitarian Universalist presence in DeKalb County?

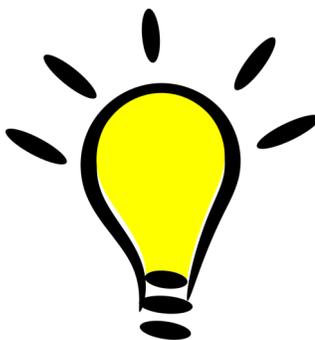
If you attended the congregational meeting, then you already received your Building Our Future letter and commitment form. If you did not, look for your letter to arrive soon!

**Sincerely,  
The Building Our Future Team**

**What is the Building Our Future campaign?**

- A campaign to raise funds to update our church building, pay staff fairly, and create a reserve fund for emergencies.
- You can fulfill your commitment over a 3-year period.
- This is different from your annual pledge to support the regular operating budget.

**Want to be featured and share your UU story? Contact Beth in the Church Office!  
We can’t wait to hear from you!!!**



## A Note From UUFDF's RE Director...

Dear Families,

Onward! to that which is endless,

As it was beginningless...

To see nothing anywhere but what you may reach it and pass it.

To look up or down no road but it stretches and waits for you —

To know the universe itself as a road —

as many roads —

as roads for traveling souls. — Walt Whitman

Because ours is a creedless faith, defining what it means to be a Unitarian Universalist can be challenging. Our adults and youth often welcome such a challenge — indeed, a questioning spirit is part of our faith. Yet, our children need to learn who Unitarian Universalists are, what we believe, and how we live in faith. Faithful Journeys equips them with language and experiences to answer these questions and help them develop a strong Unitarian Universalist identity.

Participants embark on a pilgrimage of faith, exploring how Unitarian Universalism translates into life choices and everyday actions. In each session, they hear historic or contemporary examples of Unitarian Universalist faith in action. Stories about real people model how participants can activate their own personal agency — their capacity to act faithfully as Unitarian Universalists — in their own lives, and children have regular opportunities to share and affirm their own stories of faithful action. Through sessions structured around the Unitarian Universalist Principles, Faithful Journeys demonstrates that our Principles are not a dogma, but a credo that individuals can affirm with many kinds of action. Over the course of the program, children discover a unity of faith in the many different ways Unitarian Universalists, including themselves, can act on our beliefs. All sessions include hands-on activities as well as guided discussion, reflection, and self-expression to engage participants with various learning styles. Sessions that rely heavily on verbal learning and expression also offer alternate activities that may better reach learners who are more active. Many core activities suggest adaptations to address different abilities as well as learning styles.

We invite our UUFDF “Rainbow children” (ages 4 through 1<sup>st</sup> grade) to participate in the Faithful Journeys curriculum during Sunday morning Religious Education, and we invite all members of the congregation to participate as volunteers. To help keep you informed, a full schedule of RE lessons and stories will be posted on the UUFDF bulletin boards and we will post upcoming sessions in the e-news each week.

Gladys Sanchez,  
Director of Religious Education

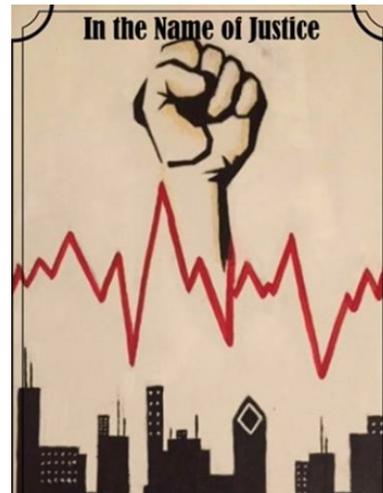


*Dear UU Friends and Family,*

On November 6, our organization hosted a community forum called "In the Name of Justice". The event created an inclusive space for youth, community members, and community leaders to talk about diversity, race and to be able to create nonviolent solutions for the future of our community. The children had fun with a non-profit organization called Elephant Rebellion and went through a workshop called "Know your rights."

After the event, I was invited to present the information to the City Council and invite them to the next community forum. The city council meeting will be on December 12.

Thank you,  
Gladys  
Call or text 708.710.0684



### **Getting to Know a UU: Donna Veeneman**

I was born in Berwyn, Illinois, where I spent most of my childhood. From there my family – father, mother, and 4 brothers moved to Oak Park, Illinois. I lived there until my junior year of high school when my father accepted a job at Hope College as a custodian in Holland, Michigan. I finished my senior year in Holland, then worked for 1 1/2 years after high school graduation to save money for college. I spent 2 years at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan, where I met my husband, Steve. We married and lived there until he left for the Air Force. We came back to Illinois after he did 4 years of service because in 1981 there were no jobs in Michigan. He found work in Arlington Heights, and we have not left Illinois since.

I came from a fundamentalist background and was a very earnest Christian in those early days. At age 14 I began reading Kalil Gibran, writings of mystics and the Transcendentalists (Emerson & Thoreau being my favorites). At 19 I was questioning the doctrines of my church and by 21 I had migrated to the most liberal church within our denomination. I stopped going completely when we moved into a Spiritual/Ecological Commune in 1976 at age 25. Our stay there for about 9 months exposed me to *The Ageless Wisdom Teachings* as taught by 2 Esoteric Schools (*The Arcane School* started by Alice A. Bailey and *The Coptic Fellowship* founded by Master Hamid Bey from an Egyptian Mystery School). I discovered a whole new world.

A year later Steve joined the Air Force and we lived in Shreveport, Louisiana, for 3 years after he received training in Denver to do calibrations on meters used to repair airplanes. While living in Louisiana we found a little Unitarian Church just outside the Air Force Base in Bossier City. It was an oasis in the middle of the Bible Belt, a small A-frame with a roof almost to the ground and the sanctuary dug into the earth a few feet. The surrounding Baptists said it was a church that was "half-way to hell already"! It took us 15 minutes to get from the parking lot into the sanctuary that fine spring morning because everyone we met gave us a hug! We loved it there. Rev. Burton Carley was fabulous and the congregation of about 30 or 40 was warm and loving. I remember writing the entire service just as I wanted it for our son's dedication at 4 months old and inviting all my friends from my part-time job at *Whites Cleaners* to it. It was a sad day when we returned up north; we missed everyone very much. We resolved to find another Unitarian Church after we settled in Arlington Heights. We found the Countryside Church Unitarian Universalist in Palatine and attended immediately. Very shortly after joining Rev. Ruppert Lovely happened to mention that his secretary was quitting and he'd be looking for a replacement. I immediately approached him about the job and I started there 3 hours/3 days a week in September of 1982. When I finally left 17 years later I was working over 20 hours a week. The church had grown from 55 to over 200 and we had built a brand new beautiful building.

When we moved to Genoa in 2002 I was exhausted, burned out and just wanted to rest. After about a year I was ready to find a church home again and remembered that Rev. Lovely said there was a Fellowship in DeKalb. That is how I found you. After all these years I am still happy to be a part of this extended family.

## Save the Date for UUFD Events!

**\*\*The UU Western Crescent Choir Festival** will be happening again this year, with UUFD and a number of other wonderful area UU choirs.

**Sunday, April 2 at the UU Church of Elgin at 4 p.m.**

**\*\*The Rev. Scott Aaseng of UU-ANI** (the Unitarian Universalist Advocacy Network of Illinois) will be meeting with the UUFD Social Justice Ministry on **Sunday, January 22 from 1 to 3 p.m.** We will discuss UU social justice commitments in the state and think of ways to work together. All are welcome to attend.

**\*\*Choir members! Tuesday, December 20** – Choir Rehearsal at UUFD 6 p.m. followed by the traditional Holiday Party hosted by Toni & Rev. Linda at 1622 Carlisle at 7:30 p.m. Please bring finger foods and a white elephant for the gift exchange.

**\*\*Christmas Eve Open House, Saturday, December 24, 6-10 p.m.** hosted by Rev. Linda & Toni at 1622 Carlisle. Come enjoy Toni's chicken soup, veggie chili, and a warm spirit of sharing. Bring finger foods or sweets and a beverage or two to share. UUFD members and friends are all welcome!

