



The Pathfinder



A Publication of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of DeKalb

Volume 62, Issue 1

158 N. Fourth St.

DeKalb, IL 60115

Feb-March 2021

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 April edition of the Pathfinder is March 21. 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.

Online Worship

For the duration of the COVID-19 crisis, UUFDF is holding online worship services at our usual time – Sundays at 10 a.m. We use Zoom, which is easily installed on a computer, tablet, or smartphone. Join the service each Sunday at uufdekalb.org/live.

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

February Theme: Mercy
Special Collection: Barb Food Mart

The prophet Micah counseled us, “To act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God.” These qualities are universal and transformative. Justice and humility are important, but it is the love of mercy that is crucial. To love mercy is to understand how very important it is in human relations. Mercy is a grace because it is not deserved. It allows a person to return to life with dignity.

February 7 – The Power of Mercy
Diane Johns, Worship Leader
Maylan Dunn-Kenney, Assistant

February 14 –
Rev. Allen, Worship Leader
Ed Miguel, Assistant

February 21 – Justice and Mercy
Maylan Dunn-Kenney, Worship Leader
Vanstrom Dracul, Assistant

February 28 –
Ed Miguel, Worship Leader
Rev. Allen, Assistant

March Theme: Respect
Special Collection: UUANI

Respect is the way that we affirm another’s worth & dignity. UU minister Tom Owen-Towle has suggested that respect is more important than love. The word respect comes from a Latin root that means “to look back, to regard.” It reminds us that when we look with the hard eyes of judgment, we would be wise to look again with the soft eyes of respect that we might truly see beneath superficialities.

March 7 – Respecting Mother Nature
Maylan Dunn-Kenney, Worship Leader
Rev. Allen, Assistant

March 14 –
Rev. Allen, Worship Leader
Maylan, Assistant

March 21 – Regarding Respect
Diane Johns, Worship Leader
Ed Miguel, Assistant

March 28 –
Ed Miguel, Worship Leader
Vanstrom Dracul, Assistant

CONTACTS:

MINISTER: Rev. Allen Harden (minister@uufdekalb.org or 773-288-2394)
OFFICE MANAGER: Kathryn Jones
PRESIDENT: Tom Stamatakos TREASURER: Ashley Ford

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Church Office phone number: 815-756-7089
email: office@uufdekalb.org

Web site: uufdekalb.org

In case of an emergency, call Board Past President Jenny Stamatakos, or President Tom Stamatakos.

Minister's Thoughts

Some Reflections

We made it through 2020, and we made it through January. Lots of stress, but things are looking up, especially on the political front. With the pandemic, it's still wait and see – vaccinations are finally getting underway, but mutated strains of the virus render the future murky still. To me, this means we should prepare to hunker down and expect to continue personal distancing and avoid gathering in groups for many months to come. Some restrictions may loosen, but I cannot see a way that we resume public church any time in the near future.

Continued separation is difficult for all of us, as individuals and as a congregation. I find it wonderful to see and hear from so many of you every Sunday, not just because I enjoy you (which I do), but also because it means we are maintaining our identity as a group. You should take great pride in the resilience of UUFD and the strong bonds you have created over the years. I encourage any of you to reach out to others, especially those who are isolated and those church friends that opt out of zoom-worship. We are coming up on one year of COVID, and a year of challenge, loneliness, and worry is a long time. Please be ever vigilant for the wellbeing of others, including UUFD folks.

I am not providing sermon topics for the next few months, because I still don't know what I will be doing. With news changing so rapidly, I prefer to wait and see what might be most timely, what messages might be needed most. Other things being equal, I would love to further stimulate our thinking about race, especially given that February is Black History month.

Again, suggestions are always welcome.

Be healthy. Be active. Stimulate your mind and feed your heart.
In peace and faith,

Rev. Allen



UUFD Staff News

Rev. Allen's schedule

- Rev. Allen will be with us (online or in-person) the 2nd (and probably 4th) Sundays of each month.
- Please contact him at minister@uufdekalb.org or 773-288-2394 with anything that's on your mind.

Office schedule

- Office manager Kathryn Jones's hours are Wed 10 - 3 and Fri 10 - 3. Please contact her online or by phone only.



Mark Your Calendar For These UUFD Events



At this point, most in-person events are canceled, except the drive-up WE Pantry and the Hope Haven meal. Keep an eye on our website and Facebook page for more updates. And please reach out to the church office to subscribe to the weekly electronic news if you haven't already done so.

Ongoing Events

Yoga with Ed Miguel – via Zoom only. Saturdays at 5 p.m. Please contact Ed for Zoom link and details.

Restorative Meditation – Cancelled

Buddhist Study Group via Zoom – 1st & 3rd Sundays at 11:45 a.m.

Zoom links are sent to everyone on the Buddhist Group mailing list. If someone not on our mailing list would like to join us, please contact Howard Solomon at dochoward00001@gmail.com.

Ordinary Folk Musical Gathering via Zoom – 2nd & 4th Sundays at 2 p.m.

February 2021

Feb 16 – Hope Haven Meal 6:30 p.m. (3rd Tuesdays)

Feb 16 – Touchstones Small Group Discussion – 10 a.m. via Zoom

Feb 18 – Touchstones Small Group Discussion – 7:30 p.m. via Zoom

Feb 21 – Board Meeting – 11:45 a.m. via Zoom

Feb 27 – Drive-thru WE Pantry 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

March 2021

TBD – Board Meeting – 11:45 a.m. via Zoom

March 16 – Touchstones Small Group Discussion – 10 a.m. via Zoom

March 16 – Hope Haven Meal 6:30 p.m.

March 18 – Touchstones Small Group Discussion – 7:30 p.m. via Zoom

March 27 – Drive-Thru WE Panty 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

From the Touchstones Journal

See the full journal [on the UUFD website](#).

The Lantern of Soul

by Clarissa Pinkola Estes

My friends, do not lose heart. We were made for these times. I have heard from so many recently who are deeply and properly bewildered. They are concerned about the state of affairs in our world now. Ours is a time of almost daily astonishment and often righteous rage over the latest degradations of what matters most to civilized, visionary people.

...In any dark time, there is a tendency to veer toward fainting over how much is wrong or unended in the world. Do not focus on that. There is a tendency, too, to fall into being weakened by dwelling on what is outside your reach, by what cannot yet be. Do not focus there.

...Ours is not the task of fixing the entire world all at once, but of stretching out to mend the part of the world that is within our reach. Any small, calm thing that one soul can do to help another soul, to assist some portion of this poor suffering world, will help immensely. It is not given to us to know which acts or by whom, will cause the critical mass to tip toward an enduring good.

What is needed for dramatic change is an accumulation of acts, adding, adding to, adding more, continuing. We know that it does not take everyone on Earth to bring justice and peace, but only a small, determined group who will not give up during the first, second, or hundredth gale.

...To display the lantern of soul in shadowy times like these—to be fierce and to show mercy toward others; both are acts of immense bravery and greatest necessity.

Source: [https:// www.awakin.org/ read/view.php?tid=2195](https://www.awakin.org/read/view.php?tid=2195)

The worship theme for February is Mercy; for March the theme is Respect.

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 (or pick up a copy at the table by the magazine rack) and hope it will lead to deeper discussions!

JOYS & SORROWS



*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.*

Hope Haven News

Celebrating our 2020 Hope Haven Heroes!

Let's recognize some Hope Haven Heroes of 2020!

2020 was not all bad. We did a lot of good as a congregation, including providing 12 awesome meals for 60. We did this despite the fact that we never saw each other in person after March! This was truly a feat considering the obstacles we faced.

Below are the members of our Heroes club categories, as well as other

Super Hero club: Volunteering 10 to 12 months. (Many of these volunteers did double duty in months where we were short volunteers.) Members of this club include: Maylan Dunn-Kenney, Bonnie Anderson, Beth Schewe, Charles Sigwart, Gretchen Sigwart, Virginia Wilcox, Sheryl Nak, and Mary Von Zellen

Golden Cape club: Volunteering 5-9 months. Members of this club include: Ashley Ford, Rev. Linda Slabon and Toni Tollerud.

Silver Cape Club: Volunteering 3-4 months. Members of this club include: Donna Veenaman.

Financial Underwriters: Provided financial donations. Members include Betty and Wayne Albrecht, Sue Willis, Chris Miguel, Bonnie Anderson and Sharon Blake.

Other volunteers in 2020 include: Jeanne Meyer, Diane Johns, Kim Meyer, Jim Hovis, Sue Sagel, Joan Garnier, and Carol Bushong.

A special thanks to Sharon Blake who served as my backup and advisor, helping to come up with a number of the menus!

We could not have provided great meals without help from everyone! We'd love to welcome new volunteers in 2021. It's easy! Often, it's a matter of purchasing something and dropping it off or heating up something basic. If anyone needs tips or suggestions or more information, please contact Danica Lovings at 815-901-4625 or danica855@gmail.com or Sharon Blake at 815-757-2444 or sblake202@gmail.com

2021 Hope Haven Meal News

Thank you to January's Hope Haven Meal Volunteers: Our Hope Haven meal in January was a resounding success thanks to Maylan Dunn-Kenney, Mary Von Zellen, Beth Schewe, Ashley Ford, Sharon Erlandson Blake, Virginia Wilcox, and Sheryl Nak. Special thanks go to Linda Slabon and Toni Tollerud and Gretchen Sigwart and Charles Sigwart who covered four of the dishes between their two households!

February Meal: The theme for the February meal on the 16th is Sloppy Joes. To see what volunteer spots are needed, please see the link for the [February Hope Haven Sign-up sheet](#).

March Meal: The theme for the March Meal on March 16th is French Onion Ground Beef Casserole. Please see the link for the [March Hope Haven Sign-up sheet](#), which also contains a link to a recipe.

We are going to test cutting the main dish to three volunteers who would each provide food for 20 to see if that helps us fill more of the spots and put less strain on those who have filled two spots when we have been short on volunteers.

Let me know your thoughts! All feedback is welcome.

Gratefully,

Danica Lovings

Hope Haven Meal Coordinator

From the Touchstones Journal

See the full journal [on the UUFD website](#).

To Love Mercy

by Rev. Gary E. Smith

“The quality of mercy is not strain’d,” says Portia to Shylock in Shakespeare’s Merchant of Venice.... “It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven upon the place beneath. It is twice bless’d: it blesseth him that gives and him that takes.... It is an attribute to God himself; and earthly power doth then show liketh God’s, when mercy seasons justice.... We do pray for mercy,” she says, “and that same prayer doth teach us all to render the deeds of mercy.”

“You know what is good,” Micah says, “and what is required of you, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.”

...[I]t’s interesting ... what Micah puts first, in fact, what he puts first and second, and then what he saves for last. The first two, do justly and love mercy, have to do with our relationships, one human being to another. It is only the third in which he explicitly puts in the relationship with God, with whatever the holy is in your life. To do justly and to love mercy ... has everything to do with how we live out our lives with one another.

Annie Dillard, writing in Holy the Firm, asks the question, “Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who shall stand in his holy place? There is no one but us,” she says. “There is no one to send, nor a clean hand, nor a pure heart on the face of the earth, nor in the earth, but only us, a generation comforting ourselves with the notion that we have come at an awkward time [and do you hear the irony?], that our innocent fathers are all dead—as if innocence had ever been— and our children busy and troubled, and we ourselves unfit, not yet ready, having each of us chosen wrongly, made a false start, failed, yielded to impulse and the tangled comfort of pleasures, and grown exhausted, unable to seek the thread, weak, and involved. But there is no one but us. There never has been.”

... What is required of us? To do justly and to love mercy. We are called to be the instruments of justice and mercy in this world.

“There is no one but us.”

... What is required of us, what ultimately matters in this world, what will we make of our lives, this span of years we are given? Life rushes on. It does not stop. “Love mercy,” says Micah.... Other translations say, “love kindness” or “love loyalty.” Weave all three words together, mercy, kindness and loyalty, and what emerges ... is the fabric of compassion, a quality of asking nothing in return.... “Love mercy,” says Micah, and ... remember ... the word “mercy,” in the story of the Good Samaritan, in the walk along the Jericho Road.

“Who is my neighbor?” Jesus is asked, and Jesus tells the story of the man walking along the road from Jerusalem to Jericho, where he is beaten, robbed, and left for dead. The priest goes by, the Levite goes by; the Samaritan does not go by. The Samaritan is moved with pity, he bandages the wounds and takes care of him. “Which of these was the neighbor?” Jesus asks the disciples. “The one who showed mercy,” reply the disciples. Peter Fleck answered Jesus’ very same question.... “Our neighbor is not necessarily somebody we like,” Peter said, “nor somebody we admire or are beholden to, not somebody who might one day be useful to us or who happens to be living next door. Our neighbor is anybody who needs us.”

... “Love mercy....” Micah did not say, “be merciful” or “do mercy.” He said “love mercy,” which ... means take mercy into yourself and embrace it. Don’t let it go. Let mercy become a part of who you are. And, if you do this, you will learn something about forgiveness and forbearance.

... “Love mercy,” says Micah, and the loving part says ... that this is not just a one-time kind of thing, as in “we stopped once along the road for a neighbor, and now we’ve done that.” When we know how to love mercy, when we say in our very bones that to love mercy is somehow required of us, that this is a piece of what matters in this life, then we learn that we must stop by the Jericho roadside again and again.

... “Love mercy,” says Micah to us, and isn’t he saying please be careful of the narrow limits we set upon one another. Be careful of the strictness by which we judge one another. Watch for the zeal with which we become all puffed up with our own self-righteousness. Love mercy, for God’s sake. Mercy... seasons the strict justice we might wish to inflict on another. “Spirit of Life come unto me. Sing in my heart all the stirrings of compassion.” What is the face of this Spirit of Life? It could be the face of one whose mercy you need in these days, who has some absolutely justifiable reason to want to hurt you, make you pay, and who instead resists inflicting harm, and even more than that, extends to you a gesture of kindness. It is undeserved. It is unexpected. It is a moment of grace and of loving mercy, bringing some of us to our knees.

... Rilke writes..., “Flare up like flame and make big shadows I can move in.” Mercy can move in us like a big shadow, and who knows what our lives can become? “We do pray for mercy,” says Shakespeare, “and that same prayer does teach us all to render the deeds of mercy,” which is to say, when we had thought all along that our prayers to God would bring mercy, our prayers will only be made manifest in our deeds, precisely when we come to love mercy.

“We cannot merely pray to you, O God,” says a prayer in the Kerem Shalom prayer book, “for we must find our own paths... Therefore, we pray instead for strength, determination, and willpower, to do, instead of just to pray, to become, instead of merely to wish.”

“Who shall stand in God’s holy place?” Annie Dillard says, “There is no one but us. There is no one to send... but only us... we ourselves unfit, not yet ready, having each of us chosen wrongly, made a false start, failed, yielded to impulse and the tangled comfort of pleasures, and grown exhausted.... But there is no one but us.” ... [W]e are the ones to love mercy. We are instruments to one another of our own salvation.

From the Touchstones Journal

See the full journal [on the UUFD website](#).

**Traveling Mercies: Why I Make Sam Go to Church
by Anne LaMott**

Sam is the only kid he knows of who goes to church, who is made to go to church two or three times a month. He rarely wants to.

This is not exactly true. The truth is he never wants to go. What 7-year-old would rather be in church than hanging out with a friend? It does not help him to be reminded that once he's there he enjoys himself, that he gets to spend the time drawing in the little room outside the sanctuary, that he only actually has to sit still and listen during the short children's sermon.

It does not help that I always pack some snacks, some Legos, his art supplies, and any friend of his whom we can lure into our churchy web. It does not help that he genuinely cares for the people there.

... You might wonder why I make this strapping, exuberant boy come with me.... I make him because I can. I outweigh him by nearly 75 pounds.

But that is only part of it. The main reason is that most of the people I know who are doing well psychologically, who seem conscious, ... who have what I want—connection, gratitude, joy—are people in community. And this funky little church. It is where I was taken in when I had nothing to give, and it has become in the truest, deepest sense, my home. My homebase.

... Believe me, church was the last place I would have ever imagined wanting to be; and so I understand why now it is the last place Sam wants to be. I think he would almost rather spend Sunday mornings getting his teeth cleaned.

"Let's go, baby," I say cheerfully when it is time for us to leave for church, and he looks up at me like a puppy eyeing the vet who is standing there holding the needle.

Source: Traveling Mercies by Anne Lamott