

UU MATTERS



The Mt. Vernon Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
1600 Isabella, Mt. Vernon, IL 62864 (618) 241-9644
An Emerging UUA Congregation

December 2009 & January 2010
Vol. 4 No. 7

Mt. Vernon UU Fellowship services are held each Sunday at 10:00 a.m.

December marks the beginning of our third season of Winterfaith, a time in which we take a moment to recognize and celebrate many of the holidays and traditions of Winter. Many of the services in December and January will welcome special guests to our fellowship, while others will be coordinated by members of the fellowship. Read more about December Winterfaith services and other MVUUF events below!

December 6th: Special Guest Bridget Rolens of the St. Louis Insight Meditation Group will speak to us as we recognize Bodhi Day, the day on which some Buddhist traditions celebrate the Enlightenment of the historic Buddha. Rolens has been a practitioner of Insight Meditation since 1997. She is vice president of the Board of Directors of Mid America Dharma. She was a Franciscan nun for 20 years where she practiced various forms of Christian contemplative meditation. She graduated Spirit Rock Meditation Center's Community Dharma Leader training in 2007. Bridget brings an experiential understanding of 12-Step recovery to her practice. She is currently teaching Mindfulness-based stress reduction. We will also recognize the second Sunday of Advent and the Feast of St. Nicolas at this service.

December 13th: Special Guest Rabbi Randy Fleisher of the Central Reform Congregation in St. Louis will preach on themes from the Jewish festival of Chanukah, which begins at sundown on December 11 and runs through sundown on the 19th. Central Reform Congregation is directly across the street from the First Unitarian Church of St. Louis, which hosted the synagogue before its building was built. Rabbi Fleisher returns to the Fellowship for his second Chanukah service with us. He is heavily involved in interfaith and social justice work in the St. Louis area. We will also recognize the third Sunday of Advent at this service. This service will be followed by a meeting of the Social Justice Action & Taskforce.

December 20th: A Service for the Winter Solstice, *Fourth Sunday of Advent*. Shannon Green will lead this service celebrating the return of the sun's light and longer days at the midpoint between the fall and spring equinoxes.

December 27th: Angela Czapiewski will lead this service.

January 1st: *Annual New Year's Day Potluck followed by Drumming*. Please bring a dish to share, your favorite games or activities, and/or a percussion instrument for a drum circle to be held after the afternoon meal. If you do not have a drum, there will be plenty to share. Fellowship doors will open at 12:00 p.m. and will remain open as long as fellowship members and friends are congregating.

January 3rd: *Epiphany*. Paul Oakley will lead a service recognizing the Christian holy day of Epiphany. Inspired by the Orthodox ritual of blessing the waters on Epiphany, this service will feature the water ceremony we created for Epiphany 2008. The central theme of Epiphany that we will bring into this service is the "resanctification" of nature, that is, the re-cognition of the sacred within the natural world.

January 10th: *Special Guest Reverend Bill Sasso will explore "The Coming of Winter."* What does the season of winter offer us, other than short days, long nights, and sloppy, cold weather? The winter holidays are gifts that this time of year brings, and there may well be other aspects in this sometimes bleak season that we can appreciate as well. The blessings of winter may depend on our own willingness to enter the spirit of the season. This service will be followed by a meeting of the Social Justice & Action Taskforce.

January 17th: *World Religion Day & The Birth of Martin Luther King Junior*. Please join us as we welcome members of the Edwardsville, Illinois based Ba'hai group to our fellowship for the third time. Shannon Green will coordinate this service in honor of, and respect for, the unity of religions and respect for all life.

January 24th: *Visual Arts & Spirituality*. Inspired by the Feast Day of Iconic Painter Andrei Rublev. This service will explore the role of art and creativity in the spiritual journey. Art can be used to worship, meditate, express our spiritual views or in many other aspects of our lives. Please bring any art or other creative expression of your own to share and display during this service.

January 31st: *Wintertime Blues*. Reverend Bill Sasso will join us again for this service looking at the down side of winter from a musical perspective, using blues music in conversation with poetic expressions of winter experiences and feelings.

All Sunday services are followed by a social hour with coffee and other refreshments in the fellowship basement immediately after the service.

Services at Mt. Vernon UU Fellowship are led and organized by members and friends of our fellowship. If you would like to volunteer to lead and/or organize a service, please use the sign up sheet on the back table of the sanctuary.

Please Note the Following:

December 19th: *Memorial Service for Saribenne Evesong. Saturday 2:00 p.m.* (To be followed by potluck dinner) Please join us as we share in the memory of our long time member Saribenne, who passed away peacefully on November 30. Please bring your memories of Saribenne to the service, along with a dish to share for a potluck dinner after the memorial service. The family of Saribenne wishes to thank everyone at the Mt. Vernon UU Fellowship for all of their love and care.



One kind word can warm three winter months.
~Japanese Proverb~

Other Upcoming Events at MVUUF:

All listed events are held at the fellowship building and are open to the public unless otherwise stated. Please email information@mtvernonuuf.org for information about any service or event.

December 4th @ 7:00: Drum Circle. Bring a drum or other instrument to play at this relaxed and informal drum circle, or simply come to listen and enjoy.

FIRST FRIDAY OF EACH MONTH

January 6th: Board of Trustees Meeting. Members of the Board of Trustees are: Nina Peacock, co-chair; Kelly Taylor, co-chair; Diane Schwitz, co-chair; Adam Stone, secretary; Angela Czapiewski, treasurer. Meetings are open to anyone interested in fellowship business. **FIRST WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH**

December 9th: LGBT Concerns Taskforce Meeting. Wednesday Evening 6:30 p.m.

The Taskforce for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Concerns will meet to finalize the wording of a proposed Welcoming Congregation Covenant and bylaws changes needed to complete. The preliminary wording of these items has been e-mailed to Fellowship members and is available to all interested party in hard-copy on the Taskforce's display/literature table in the sanctuary. If you wish to be part of the process and share your ideas on this, please join the Taskforce in this meeting. The wording on these documents finalized at this meeting will be presented to the Board at its January meeting to continue the process toward a decision at the May 2010 Membership Meeting. Also at the December 9 Taskforce meeting, the Taskforce will work on a preliminary form of a required memorandum to the UUA outlining the ways the Fellowship has met or is meeting the requirements to be listed as a Welcoming Congregation if the Membership approves the designation.

NEW REGULAR EVENT

December 13th & January 10th: circa 11:45 a.m., (following social hour). *Social Justice & Action Taskforce* will meet in the sanctuary to learn about and discuss social justice concerns and actions. This group will discuss issues that our affecting both our local communities and our national and global communities. Over time the group will seek out various projects and issues to take action on as individuals, as a group, and/or as a congregation. *You may want to bring your own lunch to this meeting.*

SECOND SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH

Open Minds Discussion Group will no longer meet monthly.

Thank you Vito for your many years of coordinating these discussions!

Other UU Matters:

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT REGARDING NEWSLETTER:

Dear friends of MVUUF,

This will be the last issue of UU Matters. I have enjoyed writing our monthly newsletter, and am grateful to have had the opportunity to do it. Because of some additional responsibilities I have taken on in 2010, I am no longer able to continue to reliably produce a monthly newsletter. I feel confident that in the months to come, our congregation will find new ways to communicate upcoming events with each other.

Thank you for your understanding,
Shannon Green

Are you considering MVUUF membership? Please ask a Board of Trustees member for a prospective member folder, or a membership form.

Treasury Matters: Financial contributions may be made in the offering basket located on the round table at the back of our sanctuary. If you would like to mail contributions instead of putting them in the offering basket, you may mail them to: MVUUF, 1600 Isabella, Mt. Vernon, IL, 62864. Please make checks payable to MVUUF. If you would like your offering to be used for a specific purpose, please clearly mark that purpose on the memo line on your check or on the envelope in which you place your offering.

Library Matters: The MVUUF Library catalogue is available online. The catalog can be accessed at www.librarything.com/catalog/MVUUF

Fellowship Contact Information: If you are looking for more information about the Mt. Vernon Unitarian Universalist Fellowship or would like to be added to our mailing list, you can do so in the following ways:

1. By Mail: The Mt. Vernon Unitarian Universalist Fellowship 1600 Isabella
Mt. Vernon, IL 62864
2. By Phone: (618) 241-9644. Please leave a voice mail message.
3. By visiting our website:
www.mtvernonuuf.org
4. By emailing our fellowship:
information@mtvernonuuf.org

MVUUF Board of Trustees members can also be reached using the fellowship voice mail or email.