

In the BUUF

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BUUF's Mission Statement:

To Question,
To love,
To serve,
To celebrate
differences—
Together.



In the BUUF is the monthly newsletter of the Berrien Unitarian Universalist Fellowship 4340 Lincoln Avenue, Saint Joseph, MI 49085-8712. Articles should be given to the [newsletter editor](#) no later than the 20th of the month.

ALONG THE WAY . . . BUUF Religious Leader Beth Lefever

As I write this column, I am aware that both our country and our world are in the midst of observances: January 20 was World Religion Day; January 21, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day; January 27, International Holocaust Remembrance Day; the month of February, Black History Month; and January 30 through April 4, the Season of Nonviolence. March is Women's History Month, and March 8, International Women's Day.

These markers of history and hope come and go with more or less notice, depending on our interest, our family heritage, our lifestyle and schedules, the involvement of our schools and communities, and the urging of our churches. They are important markers, though, and deserve more than a passing nod.

They remind us of the unimaginable pain and suffering endured by our ancestors, which ultimately paved the way for a greater humanity. They remind us of the depths and heights to which the human spirit can sink or soar. They illustrate for us the ways in which ignorance can so expertly be manipulated, and apathy exploited.

These are crucially important facts for us to remember, for as British Statesman Edmund Burke said, "Those who don't know history are destined to repeat it." But the truth is, even those of us who know history, may be destined to repeat it unless we keep the knowledge at the forefront of our minds and act upon it when we are called to do so.

Genocide still occurs. Prejudice and oppression still exist. Hatred and cruelty still abound, although I believe that we have, as a civilization, made strides in diminishing all these things. Still, our efforts are needed if "the earth (is to) be made fair, and all her people one."

And so I urge you to make note of these observances – and others – which draw us to our better selves. I urge you to take the time to attend the ceremonies, to light the candles, to join the marches. And more, I urge you to write letters, make phone calls, send money, attend protests, sit in, stand up, speak out...

As Unitarian Universalists, we are activists within a prophetic church. Let us continue to make our presence known in a world which still very much needs our thoughtful and considered insistence on ever greater equity, compassion, and justice for all.

May it ever be so.

Beth

More Bits from Beth:

Free Counseling Available: I've received information that Andrews Community Counseling Center offers free counseling with Masters and Ph.D. students at their facility in Room 156 in Bell Hall at Andrews University. I spoke with their clinical director and was assured that religion does not become a part of the process unless the client requests spiritual input. To schedule an appointment, call 269-471-6238. If you have questions that I might answer, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Weather-Related Church Cancellations: I hope it doesn't happen, but if the weather becomes cantankerous enough again this winter that we must cancel Sunday services, we will put a message on the BUUF answering machine by about 8:45 Sunday mornings. We also will send out an all-church email, assuming we have power and access to our emails. So if you have a question about whether church is going to happen, please check your emails and/or call the church. – Beth

Pastoral Letter . . . Rev. Viola Moore



We join, in the spirit of love, to develop our religious attitudes objectively and honestly that life may be more meaningful.



BUUF's Board of Trustees meets on the 4th Sunday of each month following the service. Contact [Dave Sarra](mailto:Dave.Sarra@buuf2.org) for more information.

Dear Members and Friends,

Religious belief is currently under heavy fire. Candidates for the presidency are harassed about how their faith will inform domestic and foreign policy. Some scientists like Richard Dawkins and Christopher Hitchens tell us that religion is a corrupting delusion. People are confused about the left and right wings of the Reformation. Political discussion reveals an abysmal lack of knowledge of history and religion. As the campaigns heat up the extremes at both ends of the religious spectrum are sounding their raucous gawps across the rooftops of the country. The question of evolution and creationism is back in full force as Mike Huckabee proclaims that he "cannot believe we are descended from monkeys."

Does the faith of a candidate really matter? It certainly did when John Kennedy was running for the presidency. Fears were expressed that Roome would dictate how we were governed. When he was elected as the first Catholic, one humorist noted that the new president sent a telegram to the pope saying, "UNPACK!" A faith that is sincerely held informs the whole life, everything that one does and supports. The gentle Baptist faith of Pres. Carter assured us that he would not start a war for trivial reasons. The pundits tell us that he had the highest IQ of any president since Washington, with bad boy Pres. Clinton just behind. We, as religious liberals, act daily on the seven principles, and take them into the voting booth. Religion cannot be a separate thing, so it does matter if candidates practice a faith for even atheism is a faith.

This whole debate raises the issue of religion and science. Too often the two are pitted against each other as if they were in necessary contradiction. Religious faith is a commitment to a form of motivated belief. Science achieves its success by the modesty of its ambition. The concept of reality offered by scientism is that of a world of metastable, replicating information-processing systems.. DARWINS ANGEL criticizes Dawkins for a lack of trust in the power of imagination to explore reality, such as we explore through poetry.

No progress will be made in the debate unless people are prepared to recognize that the issue of truth is as important to religion as it is to science. Religion does not have absolute proof of its beliefs but neither does science. The interlacing of experience and interpretation introduces ambiguity into the argument. Religious people commit themselves to what they believe to be true, while knowing it might be false. That is our human epistemic condition, so we should encourage caution. In this spirit, we need to enter the dialogue between science and religion.

As the campaigns unfold over the months, let us keep in mind that we make our political decisions in clock-time, aware that our choices have an eternal dimension and that our votes may determine the fate of our planet. So much depends on our political awareness.

February 14th we celebrate St. Valentine, the monk who went about doing good. Let us celebrate love in all its magic and intoxicating mystery.

Love,

BUUF Ministers

Religious Leader — Beth Lefever, minister@buuf2.org
Rev. Dr. Roger Brewin, Rev. Donald Wheat, Rev. Viola Moore (Emerita)

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Most PHOTOS for In the BUUF by Heartha Whitlow
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Religious Education . . . Teresa LaPlante, DRE



RE Vision

The purpose of the Berrien Unitarian Universalist Fellowship religious education program is to provide:

- A sense of community
- Knowledge of UU history
- An understanding of world religions
- A spiritual sense
- Connection with nature
- Social action
- A grasp of how to talk about UUism with other children

Adopted by the RE Committee January 2000

Kids photos by Ashley LaPlante



Good Job, Children of BUUF!

Didn't the children do a fine job singing at Christmas? Due to the weather, we did not have as many practice days as we would have liked, but they took on the challenge and sang from their heart. I am always amazed at the spirit with which the children of BUUF join in on all of the activities of their church. Good job, kids!

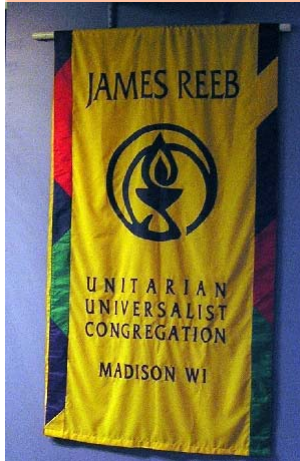


A Surprise Gift...

Life is not only a journey; it's a series of journeys. It sounds like a cliché, but if we sit and look back, beyond the events to our feelings and thoughts at the time, we can almost see the cycles of our growth. The highs, the lows, the experiences that brought truth, the lessons learned (for that is the point of it all). I've been through some dark days in the past month as another chapter of my life comes to an end, with all the accompanying drama found in endings. This one hit me pretty hard not only in my spirit, but in my physical body. I was discouraged. My energy was low. My body ached all over as if I had fought an actual battle (and, in many ways, I had). Every morning was a struggle as I decided whether or not it was worth it to open my eyes and face the day....then, the mail came.

I received an anonymous \$50 gift card in the mail one day. Try as I might, I could not guess who it might have come from (aside from clues that it was from a woman and postmarked in Kalamazoo). But you have no idea how that gift lifted my spirits. Christmas was past and those who were expected to give me gifts had, and I had reciprocated, but to receive an unexpected gift from someone who clearly did not want to be known, did not expect reciprocation, did not even want to be thanked, was something I had never experienced before. At a time in my life when I had nothing left to give, I was given a gift that said it was okay. It was like a big hug from the universe when I most needed a hug!

In the same mail, there was a package from a book club I belong to. I had not ordered anything from the club—had apparently forgotten to tell them not to send the current selection. Being a book lover, I opened the package, anyway. Who knows? It might be something I would enjoy reading.



James Reeb UU
Congregation, Madison, WI

To contact Teresa, e-mail
[DRE at buuf2.org](mailto:DRE@buuf2.org)



Born in June, 1870, in the South Bohemian village of Radomysl, Norbert Capek was the only son of Josef Capek and Marie Marek.

It wasn't a book, but a package of Celtic/Druid Tarot cards. I have been studying the Druids during these past months and I have always wanted to collect Tarot cards—they are all so beautiful! To receive them in the same mail as the gift card was like an extension of the gift—so what if I had to pay for this part of it?

From then on, my days got better. The aches went away. Life returned. I still don't know who sent the gift card. If it was you, thank you from the bottom of my heart. I look on it as a "pay it forward" gift and will be watching for ways to help someone else like this person helped me.

Cakes for the Queen of Heaven: In Ancient Times

"How would your life have been different if, when you were growing up, the divine had been imaged as female?"

That question is asked in this long-awaited sequel to the popular first class on feminist theology, *Cakes for the Queen of Heaven*. So, those who took the first course, be sure to register early for this second part. Those who did not take it, you can start now on your learning of feminist theology. This class will discuss the Goddess in a matriarchal society.

In Ancient Times by Shirley Ann Ranck introduces participants to ancient Goddesses, weaving their stories together with major concerns of women today. This 5-session adult religious education curriculum (for anyone 14 years and older) includes themes such as, The Sacred Female, In the Name of the Mother and the Daughter, Womanpower, The First Turning-From Goddess to God, and Reclaiming Women's Heritage of Peace.

Class Information: This 5-session class is open to anyone 14 years and older. Classes will be held on Saturdays 7-9pm, April 12-May 10 (May 11 is Mother's Day) OR in one intensive woman-filled week, May 5-10 (excluding Tuesday). Cost for this class is \$10. Register for your choice of session by emailing [DRE @ buuf2.org](mailto:DRE@buuf2.org) or pick up a registration form at BUUF and give to Teresa. This class will be open to the public.

This curriculum was published by UU Women & Religion. You can read more about it on their website: <http://www.uuwr.org/store.htm#curricula>

Dancing on the Threshold of Balance: 20 Years of WomanSpirit

CMwD women will gather again at North Shore Unitarian Church in Deerfield, Illinois, February 22-24, 2008. Keynote speaker will be the [Rev. Shirley Ranck](#), PhD, author of the ground-breaking adult religious education curriculum "Cakes for the Queen of Heaven." Besides her keynote address and workshop on Saturday, Rev. Ranck will be speaking at both North Shore Unitarian Church Sunday services on the 24th. Her sermon topic is "The Grandmother Galaxy." [Online registration](#) is open, and the deadline is Sunday, February 10. Brochures are available in easy-to-read [web](#) format and PDF. For more information, contact Registrar [Karin Janowski](#).

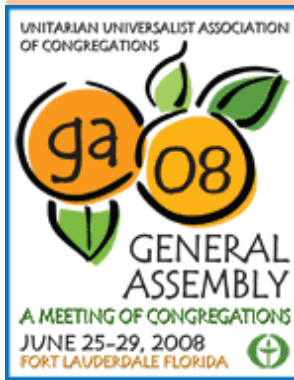
RE Calendar of Special Dates

February

- 3 – Lesson 13: Malvina Reynolds: Love is Like a Magic Penny
- 10 – Lesson 14: Beatrix Potter
- 17 – Mardi Gras lesson
- 24 – Lesson 15: Olympia Brown: Of Course a Woman Can be a Minister!

March

- 2 – Lesson 16: Pete Seeger: Singing for Justice
- 9 – Lesson 17: Norbert Capek: The Man Who Loved Beauty
- 16 – Inter-Generational Service: Spring Celebration
- 23 – Lesson 18: P.T. Barnum (Part 1): Advertising Yourself
- 30 – Lesson 19 (Part 2): Greatest Show on Earth!



General Assembly is in Ft. Lauderdale, FL this year. June 25-29, 2008. More information at www.uua.org/ga. Registration generally opens around March 1st.

Milne photos by Gary Cook

BOB MILNE NIGHT AT BUUF



The weather outside was frightful, but still we had a wonderful night of fun, food and great music with ragtime pianist Bob Milne. I believe there were just over fifty people in attendance at the January 23 concert, and probably more than half came from outside the church. This is a good way for people to get to know us. I hesitate to thank people because, always, someone is missed, but those I am aware of who worked hard to get the concert off the ground include Amy Eklund, Dave Sarra, Gary Cook and Evan Lefever. There are also a number of you who brought snacks and helped with kitchen duties, for which we are very grateful. Bob and his wife, Linda, enjoyed being with us and agreed with some enthusiasm to come again next year. Though we must schedule them as their calendar dictates, hopefully we'll be able to have them when the weather is a bit more trustworthy...

Beth



FUN SONG FROM THE BUCHELES

In our mailbox on this snowy day we found these words from Bucheles: to the tune of "Battle Hymn of the Republic"

My bones proclaim a story of incompetent design
My back still hurts, my sinus clogs, my teeth just won't align.
If I had drawn the blueprint I would certainly resign .
Incompetent design!

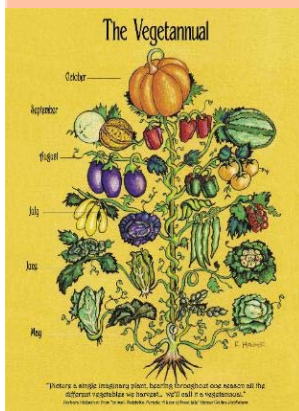
Chorus:

Evo- evo- evolution. Design is but a mere illusion.
Darwin sparked our revolution. Science shall prevail!

Written in 2005 by a scientist, Donald U. Wise, emeritus professor of geology at the University of Massachusetts as one humorous alternative to Creationist ideas. A Darwin statement I picked up from the National Geographic that I like: "It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change." – Kate Fuller



BUUF is a part of the UUA's [Central Midwest District](#). Subscribe to the District newsletter, The Central Midwesterner at www.cmwd-uua.org.



MARCH "IN THE BUUF" will be about a week later than usual. Please get your articles and news to me by Feb 26. Thanks! – Gretchen



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Christopher Brewin	February 02
Dorothy Long	February 07
David Sarra	February 11
Tristan Connell	February 12
Gary Cook	February 13
Melinda Kennedy	February 15
Fred Klawiter	February 17
Walter Pascal	February 27

The BUUF book club has chosen *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle* by Barbara Kingsolver as the March selection. Emily Bettencourt will host the meeting at 7p on March 14. The April date has not been determined yet but we will be reading *We Were the Mulvaney*s by Joyce Carol Oates. May will be another opportunity to share poems and in June we are considering *A Thousand Splendid Suns* as our selection.

From Publishers Weekly
Reviewed by Nina Planck

Michael Pollan is the crack investigator and graceful narrator of the ecology of local food and the toxic logic of industrial agriculture. Now he has a peer. Novelist Kingsolver recounts a year spent eating home-grown food and, if not that, local. Accomplished gardeners, the Kingsolver clan grow a large garden in southern Appalachia and spend summers "putting food by," as the classic kitchen title goes. They make pickles, chutney and mozzarella; they jar tomatoes, braid garlic and stuff turkey sausage. Nine-year-old Lily runs a heritage poultry business, selling eggs and meat. What they don't raise (lamb, beef, apples) comes from local farms. Come winter, they feast on root crops and canned goods, menus slouching toward asparagus. Along the way, the Kingsolver family, having given up industrial meat years before, abandons its vegetarian ways and discovers the pleasures of conscientious carnivory.

This field — local food and sustainable agriculture — is crowded with books in increasingly predictable flavors: the earnest manual, diary of an epicure, the environmental battle cry, the accidental gardener. *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle* is all of these, and much smarter. Kingsolver takes the genre to a new literary level; a well-paced narrative and the apparent ease of the beautiful prose makes the pages fly. Her tale is both classy and disarming, substantive and entertaining, earnest and funny. Kingsolver is a moralist ("the conspicuous consumption of limited resources has yet to be accepted widely as a spiritual error, or even bad manners"), but more often wry than pious. Another hazard of the genre is snobbery. You won't find it here. Seldom do paeans to heirloom tomatoes (which I grew up selling at farmers' markets) include equal respect for outstanding modern hybrids like Early Girl. Kingsolver has the ear of a journalist and the accuracy of a naturalist. She makes short, neat work of complex topics: what's risky about the vegan diet, why animals belong on ecologically sound farms, why bitterness in lettuce is good. Kingsolver's clue to help greenhorns remember what's in season is the best I've seen. You trace the harvest by botanical development, from buds to fruits to roots. Kingsolver is not the first to note our national "eating disorder" and the injuries industrial agriculture wreaks, yet this practical vision of how we might eat instead is as fresh as just-picked sweet corn. The narrative is peppered with useful sidebars on industrial agriculture and ecology (by husband Steven Hopp) and recipes (by daughter Camille), as if to show that local food—in the growing, buying, cooking, eating and the telling — demands teamwork.

Nina Planck is the author of *Real Food: What to Eat and Why* (Bloomsbury USA, 2006). Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.



We Are A WELCOMING CONGREGATION

This Unitarian Universalist community welcomes and celebrates the presence and participation of bisexual, gay, lesbian, and/or transgender people.

Charles Darwin in 1880, still working on his contributions to evolutionary thought which had an enormous effect on many fields of science. *[from Wikipedia]*

UPCOMING EVENTS

[don't forget to check our online [calendar!](#)]

February 9	8:00 pm Contact Sandy and Larry Feldman	Concert at the Box Factory — Pam Chappell-Carling, Peter Carling, Elfi
	4 PM (CST) Contact Rev. Brewin: rabrewin@aol.com 773.881.4028	DARWIN'S 199th BIRTHDAY Keynote: "Darwinism and the Meaning of Life" - Professor Arthur Falk of Western Michigan University, followed by a responder's panel. Admission \$6.00 All receive a complementary copy of Journal of Religious Humanism, featuring Dr. Falk's article. First U of Hobart, 497 Main Street, Hobart, IN 46342.
	7 PM (CST) Contact Rev. Brewin: rabrewin@aol.com 773.881.4028	DARWIN'S 199th BIRTHDAY An historic (but entirely fictional) re-enactment: Darwin's 60th Birthday party aboard the docked HMS Beagle. Music by Trois Canards, period food, dancing, plus appearances by Darwin, Huxley, Wilberforce, Tennyson and others. Admission \$10 (under 18 - \$6). First U of Hobart, 497 Main Street, Hobart, IN 46342.
February 10	Beth Lefever	DARWIN'S 199th BIRTHDAY SUNDAY SERVICE – on Darwin Deadline to register for Winter WomanSpirit Feb 22-24 in Deerfield, IL . keynote speaker Rev. Shirley Ranck, author of "Cakes for the Queen of Heaven."
February 13	Noon - 2:30 PM (CST) 7:00 PM (EST) Contact Rev. Brewin: rabrewin@aol.com 773.881.4028	(Day after) Darwin Day Activities Indiana University NW campus, 3400 Broadway, Gary IN 46408 - faculty & student presentations, plus Charlie's birthday cake. at BUUF in St. Joseph , "Valentine's Day – Origin of Species." Charles Darwin - dramatic presentation, music, refreshments. Admission \$7, children \$4.00 TICKETS: Advance prices: Purchase in advance, take \$1 off all ticket prices. All event pass purchased in advance: \$22.00 adults \$16 under 18 GREEN INITIATIVE: We encourage lessening your impact on the environment, so BUUF members and friends attending the events in Hobart or Gary by CARPOOL qualify for a gas grant: 2 people to a car \$5, three people \$10, 4 people \$15.00 5 or more \$20.
February 17	Rev. Viola Moore	SUNDAY SERVICE
February 24	Beth Lefever	SUNDAY SERVICE
March 2	Rev. Don Wheat	SUNDAY SERVICE
March 8	6-9 pm	Cabaret
March 14		Book Club at Emily B's
April 12		Pledge Kick Off Dinner
May		Cakes for the Queen of Heaven

THIRD ANNUAL BUUF CABARET TO INCLUDE KIDS!

The third annual BUUF Cabaret is just around the corner – Saturday, March 8 – and this year will include an hour of kids' "cabaret" before the adult fun begins.

Beginning at 6:00 the amazing, talented, and, of course, good looking junior BUUFians will begin the fun with their own talent program. Several of them inquired, and so let us urge them to contain their multitudinous talents within some acts, skits, songs, dances... suitable for impressionable adults. At around 7:00, after the accolades for those performances have died down, the adults will take the stage for an hour or two while the kids watch a movie in one of the classrooms.

We will have sign-up sheets for both the children and the adults, as well as sign-up sheets for the substantial food and drink we will want for the necessary nourishment to withstand the evening's fun.

We've scheduled this event later in the year, hoping the weather will be more cooperative than it was last year, so please do plan on attending. You may join in the fun by participating in the audience, or you may really have fun by being in the show. Songs, music, dance, skits, story-telling... you name it. We aren't looking for excellence. We're looking for sharing, fun and fellowship. So mark your calendars now – March 8: children from 6 to 7, adults from 7 to 9-ish.

In the BUUF

A publication of

Berrien Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

4340 Lincoln Avenue
St. Joseph, MI 49085



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