



**MINISTER'S SLANT - ... Beginning and End**

*We shall not cease from exploration. And the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time. — T.S. Eliot*

Consulting my calendar, I see that there are lovely bookends framing the month of April. On the first of the month, which is also Easter and April Fools' Day(!), we will dedicate Elizabeth Peach, daughter of Bridget and Elliott, granddaughter of Andy and Leslie Hawley. On the 29th of the month, my family clan will gather in Rockford where the memorial service for my sister, Conni, will be held. We will scatter her ashes in the memorial garden at the Rockford UU Church.

To be called to welcome a precious new life and let go another, grown precious over many years, is to enter a strangely contemplative time when I hold the beginning and end in my heart and wonder at the beautiful and tumultuous events that will occur for Elizabeth and have now ended for Conni. (Or, if she is off on new adventures on some other plane of existence, I will not share them with her, so they have ended for me.)

Nicolas of Cusa once remarked that the least objectionable definition of God is the coincidence of opposites. Beginning and end. Alpha and omega. By that he may have meant to imply that the opposites hold within their embrace all possibilities that fall between them. And so, God is all-inclusive — beginning and end, alpha and omega.

I have reached no lofty conclusions during this contemplation, but I do enjoy the wonderments, juggling the beginning and end in my mind that strives for clarity where none is to be found. Mystery precedes the beginning and extends itself beyond the end, and I'm discovering a good bit in the middle as well! The important questions remain, approached by poets, storytellers, and theologians, but never settled. I live in awe and gratitude. . . and considerable ignorance.

Be blessed, one and all.

Armida

*P.S. Ready to join this church? Well, hooray! Let's gather after the service on April 15<sup>th</sup> for orientation. Bring questions and sassy comments!! See you then! Everyone welcome.*

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## **Board Report**

The kitchen renovation has started with the purchase of 2 new stoves from Schultz Appliance in Scales Mound. The board formed an ad hoc committee of Michael Staver, Dan and Joan Rawce Metzger, and Mark Haman that would determine a plan for what needs to be done to make the area easier to work around. We budgeted \$5,000. towards the project for this year and will complete the work in stages. We started advertizing in the Freeport Journal Standard's Church page that comes out every Thursday and in the weekly Scene paper that is distributed on Wednesday to go along with the ad that has been running in the Galena Gazzette. Volunteers are needed to help with the satellite service to be held May 6th at Parkview in Freeport. Contact Sheila Haman if you can help. The round table idea for the Patterson room has been put in effect on a trial basis with 2 borrowed tables. It seems that members like the idea of sitting and conversing around them during coffee hour. Keep on bringing personal supply items or drop some money in the container for the FACC . We want to acknowledge and thank Renee Dieschbourg for being our liaison to the FACC . Don't forget about the Italian Dinner April 21st .

### **Don Mueller 1929 - 2018**

We note the passing of Don Mueller -- veteran of the Army Rangers, that tall, lanky man with a joke for every occasion, an ardent Green Bay Packers fan, a fisherman in summer or winter, father of four, grandfather of eight, friend to everyone, beloved companion to Edith. He was a kind and gentle man, with few or no complaints. He had a wide tolerance for other people's differences and could always find the humor in most situations. We never heard a negative or critical word from him but only encouragement and praise. We miss him and bless his memory.

## **Our Kitchen**

Many of you have already seen the adjustment that Dan Metzger and I made to the counter to ease the traffic flow to our new stoves. The Kitchen Committee (Michael, Joan RW, Dan and Mark) will make a recommendation to the Board at the April meeting as to what should be done next. Talk to any or all of them to give input or find out what they are thinking. – Mark Haman

## **Changing Artwork**

The "gallery" upstairs has several new additions by Roger Goodspeed and three pieces belonging to Lee Anderson. If your artwork was replaced by one of these, please talk to Mark and he will return it to you. If you have a piece of art you'd like to share at church, again, talk to Mark.

## **Food and Culture Class**

Michael Staver will continue his lessons on Food and Culture after coffee hour on Sunday, April 8th. Michael started out the last class with the hunter/gatherers and took us through the advent of agriculture and cooking vessels. This will be a very informal session with discussion and potentially some good laughs as we learn more about the history of food and culture.

## **SAVE THE DATE - SATELLITE SERVICE in FREEPORT! – Sunday, May 6, 2018**

As part of implementing our church's 5-year plan, we are holding our second off-site service, this time in Freeport! It will be held on Sunday, May 6 at 10:30 a.m. at Parkview Home, 1711 W. Church St. Parkview is located just off of Park Blvd., near the entrance to Krape Park. The service will be held in the handicap accessible all-purpose room adjacent to the parking lot. Please look for the pink directional signs! It is very important that we have strong attendance from current members and friends so that we may attract new people from the Freeport area. Please help us fill the pews (chairs, actually!). If the weather is nice, we will be able to stroll out onto the patio during coffee hour. There will be music and coffee hour as usual. If you have any questions or need a ride, please contact Sheila at 815-777-0493 or any of the Board members. Everyone is welcome.

Please note that there will be no service in Stockton on May 6. – *Sheila Haman*

### **Touchstones theme for April - Transformation**

Please join us on Sunday, April 8 for the Touchstones Adult Discussion Group. We'll meet at 9:15 in the RE area. This group is open to anyone interested in some stimulating, thought provoking conversations. No need to sign-up, just show-up! The material that will be discussed can be found on line at <http://www.uuchurchofstockton.org/touchstones.html>. If you have a chance, please look over the discussion material. We are pretty loose, so we'll be happy to have your thoughts whether you've read the material or not. Please consider joining us! Extra hard copies of the Touchstones Journal are available in the Patterson Room for anyone who is interested. – Laura Dufford

A reminder to the Galena/West end group – next meeting is Wednesday, April 18 at 11:30 at E-Town.

### **News and Notes**

#### **Joan Harmet Honored with Conservation Award**

The Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation (JD CF) will honor Joan Harmet with the 2018 Nancy Hamill Winter Conservation Leadership Award at their annual meeting in April.

Joan has been an active force for the conservation movement in Jo Daviess County since the early 1990's. She founded and remains active in the Jo Daviess County Bluebird Recovery Program. That program has fledged over 25,700 bluebirds since 1992 and has been recognized nationally for its successes.

Joan has also worked with the North American Bluebird Society (NABS) which has moved from being a group of blue birders to a professionally managed program working with state and local bird conservation programs.

Bluebirds are her passion but she is also a vital part of public outreach programs for the Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation.

Hearty congratulations, Ms Bluebird!

#### **Doug Dufford Featured Speaker at NIFA**

Doug Dufford will be the featured speaker at the Northwest Illinois Forestry Association's annual meeting March 27. Doug, a biologist for the Illinois Department of Natural Resources will speak on large predators in the area. He will also give an update on Chronic Wasting Disease in wild deer and tell of his experiences with prescribed burns in woodlands.

Our UU community is proud to say Doug is one of us!

## FACC Report

On March 8, I attended Freeport Area Church Cooperative (FACC) Annual Board meeting. A quorum was not reached, so some voting business was not able to take place. The meeting focused on reviewing the 2017 Annual Report and the FY2018 Budget. The current FACC facility is in need of some major improvements: cracked foundation, redo parking lot/take down fencing, window repairs, inspect boiler system, and door replacements. Currently, there is discussion about looking for a new location versus spending the money on these needed fixes. The FACC delegate assembly plans to meet in April, May, and June to focus on making some decisions about the forward movement of either the building repairs or seeking out other properties. I will leave both the "Agenda" and "2017 Annual Report" packets by our FACC donations board downstairs for those that are interested in looking it over in more detail. The next delegate assembly meeting will be at the Freeport Church of the Brethren on Thursday, April 12 at 7 pm. ~ *Renee Dieschbourg*

## U. U. Fundraising Schedule 2018

**April 21:** Fine Italian Cuisine & Song. Chef Michael Staver & Musician Jim Mantey. Choose between 5 p.m. & 7 p.m. seatings with concert in between. Please sell tickets! Invite your friends! See Laurie Wurster, Mark & Sheila Haman or Mel Heidenreich about tickets. \$20 adults. \$10 children.

**May 19:** Brat & Hot Dog Sale @ Sullivan's, noon.

**June 23:** Corkless in Galena. We will be selling chocolate desserts! Something new!

**July 14:** Brat & Hot Dog Sale @ Sullivan's, noon.

**August:** Planning a BBQ dinner prepared by Chef Michael Staver. Date and details to follow. Something new!

**September:** Council Hill Station Fundraiser for Service Partners. Date & details to follow.

## Road Side Clean Up

The Church's responsibility for picking up trash on our 1 mile section of Rt. 78, south of Stockton needs to be done every spring and fall. April 22nd after the Church service and coffee we will be heading out to do our part in cleaning up the environment if we can get enough help. It takes around a hour and all you need to bring is older clothes, gloves, and shoes.

Please contact Ted Davenport if you can help, ( 815-238-8781 ).

## Tables for Sale \$\$

At the annual meeting in January it was discussed to purchase 6 ft. round tables for the Patterson room. Because of space limitations the Board decided to sell the older rectangular tables. Now is your chance to own 1 or more. We are offering them to anyone for \$25.00, first come first serve. There are 8, eight foot tables and 2, six foot tables. Contact Ted Davenport ( 815-238-8781 ).

## Church Cancellation Protocol

Church services and other related events have to be canceled from time to time because of weather emergencies or other unforeseen situations. The following television stations will be contacted: From the Quad Cities 8-WQAD 6-KWQC 4-WHBF . From Rockford 23-WIFR 17-WTVO 13-WREX . We will also will send out an e-mail. Contact Co-Moderators with questions.

Please help spread the word! Our Italian dinner is coming up. Tickets go on sale March 25<sup>th</sup>. Bring your friends and family. We'll need servers and kitchen help. Be ready to say 'yes'! Please also consider a donation toward food purchase or food items.

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## **Benvenuta Primavera!**

**Welcome spring with**  
**FINE ITALIAN CUISINE**  
**AND SONG**

Prepared by Chef Michael Staver  
With Musical Performance by  
Jim Mantey

**Saturday, April 21, 2018**

Menu

*Meatballs with Marinara Sauce ~ Linguini with Artichoke Sauce  
Meat and Vegetarian Lasagna ~ Zucchini Soup ~ Salad  
Bread ~ Dessert ~ Coffee / Tea  
Wine available*

1<sup>st</sup> dinner seating: 5:00 p.m. served in the Patterson Room-lower level  
Concert by Jim Mantey: 6:00 - 7:00 p.m. performed in Sanctuary in upper level (elevator available)

2<sup>nd</sup> dinner seating: 7:00 p.m. served in The Patterson Room-lower level

Dinner and Concert: \$20.00 \$10.00 age 10 and younger

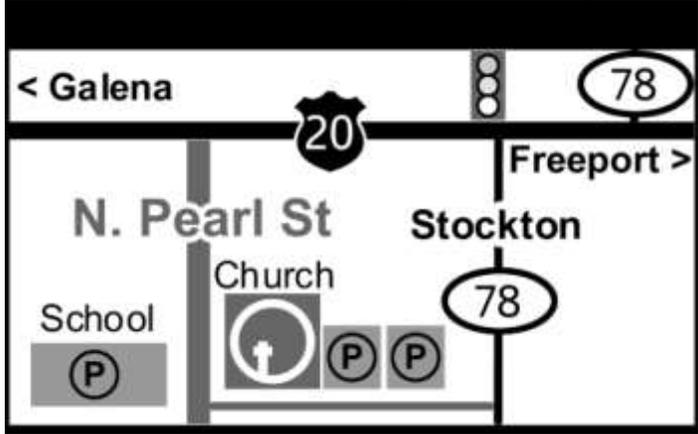
Reserved seating is recommended! (Seating is limited.)  
Purchase tickets from: Mark & Sheila (815)777-0493; Laurie (815)266-2828 ;  
Mel at Rausch Realty (815)947-3963

## Worship Committee Report

Because there are 5 Sundays in April, we have 5 opportunities for spiritual growth and community interaction. Join us!

Rev. Armida will be in pulpit on April 1 and April 15. On April 8, our guest speaker will be Lisa Kivirist, author and activist who will lead us on a journey toward sustainable living. Two local northwest Illinois Unitarian ministers, Lynda Slabon and Kent Mayfield will be with us on April 22 and 29.

We hope you find that each of these services will be a great reason to be with us throughout April. See you in church!

CALENDAR- April 2018	CHURCH INFORMATION
<p><b>Sunday, April 1</b> 10:30 a.m. Easter Sunday! "<i>Holy Fools and Roustabouts</i>," being a consideration of both Easter and April Fools. What are we to make of the coincidence of the days? Rev. Armida holding forth. Child Dedication: Elizabeth Peach</p> <p><b>Sunday, April 8</b>, 10:30 a.m. Guest speaker will be Lisa Kivirist, author and activist Before the service: 9:15 a.m. Touchstones! Everyone welcome Food and Culture Class after service</p> <p><b>Sunday, April 15</b>, 10:30 a.m. <i>A Possible Prayer?</i> Is prayer a useful, or meaningful, spiritual practice? Let's experiment with what is possible. Rev. A. again.</p> <p><b>Wednesday, April 18</b> at 11:30 Touchstones Galena/West end group – next meeting at E-Town.</p> <p><b>Sunday, April 22</b>, 10:30 a.m. Northwest Illinois Unitarian minister, Lynda Slabon</p> <p><b>Sunday, April 29</b>, 10:30 a.m. Northwest Illinois Unitarian minister, Kent Mayfield</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>219 N PEARL STREET, STOCKTON, IL</b></p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Wheel chair parking and elevator access is available from the rear parking lot.            Sunday Services at 10:30 AM            Rev. Armida Alexander  <a href="http://UChurchOfStockton.org">UChurchOfStockton.org</a>  <a href="https://www.facebook.com/UChurchOfStockton">Facebook.com/UChurchOfStockton</a>  <a href="mailto:uustockton@gmail.com">uustockton@gmail.com</a></p>