



## MINISTER'S SLANT -

*The true harvest of my life is intangible — a little star dust caught, a portion of the rainbow I have clutched. — Henry David Thoreau*

In summing up the essence of his life, Thoreau did not mention his academic degrees, his manufacturing plant, his travels or writing skill. He sees at the heart of life intangible, bright, ephemeral things glittering at the edge of perception and only for a moment — star dust and rainbow, and but a small portion of those! What is it within human beings that is attracted to that distant light, that spectrum arching in air? I don't know, but I have felt the same sort of fascination. And it appears in many places — fireflies at dusk, mist rising from the hollows, hawks' wings, trees.... We can hear it in the songs of the BrownThrush, Meadow Lark, the rhythm of the sea, and all this was going on millennia before humans began to make music of their own. What links all these experiences together is that they strike us as beautiful. And beauty, related to holiness as it is, has a strange power to heal the troubled soul.

Rabbi Abraham Heschel wrote, Faith is not the clinging to a shrine but an endless pilgrimage of the heart. Our goal should be to live life in radical amazement, get up in the morning and look at the world in a way that takes nothing for granted. Everything is phenomenal; everything is incredible; never treat life casually. To be spiritual is to be amazed. Well, I find it convenient that the natural world arranges itself in beauty even in winter. Now, though, we can watch the green return to the driftless, a yearly amazement. Why do we not tire of the spectacle, as we tire of TV programs or games? I'll hazard a guess that it might be because our bodies and minds are made up of the same stuff, and we recognize Earth and her children as kindred spirits sharing time and life with us. Perhaps we are pagans at heart — most at home in the natural world. Starhawk prays thus, Earth Mother, you who are called by a thousand names. May all remember we are cells in your body and dance together.

Wendell Berry (Hymal # 485) describes his cure for despair. He goes to the place where the wood drake rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds. I come into the peace of wild things... I come into the presence of still water. Sound familiar? He leadeth me beside the still waters; He restoreth my soul. (Psalm 23:2,3)

So, in the Spring of the year, the best spiritual discipline is to put ourselves in the way of the beauty that restores, the beauty that is the goal of that endless pilgrimage of the heart and surrounds us every step of the way. Get out there; be in it; watch; listen.

That's it. A Blessing. *It was worth being a bubble, just to have held that rainbow thirty seconds.* — Carl Sandburg

## Board Report

It has been decided to give the 5th Sunday donations to the Stockton Ministerial Association. There will be four 5th Sundays - April, July, September and December. The donations will be saved and presented in January. These funds are needed to provide emergency housing for transients passing through Stockton.

Randy Downing will present the March Service Partner check of \$272.36 to the Warren Food Pantry.

Arrangements have been made to have Jack Townsend do the mowing again this year. We discussed arrangements for our satellite service in Freeport at Parkview on May 6. We will run an ad in the Freeport Journal Standard. The board feels money spent on publicity is vital to the success of these outreach programs as well as activities such as our Italian dinner and the Council Hill event.

Any further kitchen remodeling will be discussed after the Italian Dinner. That event will surely be a test of our kitchen.

Mark Haman will do some cosmetic "fix-up" of the furnace room and closet doors. Thanks to Lee Anderson's urging, we discussed the co-ordination of our publicity. Lee has been our go-to person for years, and will continue to be so, but we needed to clarify the many roles various people play. There are three people who work behind the scenes to handle communication. Kate Miller does our in-house newsletter, and Lee and Carol Risinger get items to the newspapers. Armida keeps us informed with the Friday Flash.

All committees are asked to get pictures of events and speakers. There will be write ups with each presentation to our Service Partners. We want to be sure the community knows all the great things going on in this small church.

The Board is looking forward to a busy Spring Schedule of our big Italian Dinner, the satellite service in Freeport, highway clean-up, the possibility of new members joining, and the variety of services planned. Welcome Spring!!

- Linda Weeder

### **Easter Sunday Leslie Hawley's granddaughter Elizabeth was dedicated**



## MidAmerica U U Buddhist Fellowship (UUBF) Daylong Retreat, May 2018

One-day MidAmerica Unitarian Universalist Buddhist Fellowship retreat, May 5, 2018, 9-5, at Lake County Unitarian Universalist Church in Heartland, Wisconsin (half hour west of Milwaukee).

Rev. Zenshin Florence Caplow will be the keynote speaker. Florence is the minister at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Urbana Champaign, Illinois and a Soto Zen priest and teacher in the Shunryu Suzuki Roshi lineage. She has been practicing vipassana and Zen for thirty years, is on the Board of the UU Buddhist Fellowship, and is the co-author of the Hidden Lamp: Stories from Twenty-Five Centuries of Awakened Women.

Join us for a day of comradery, meditation, dharma talks and discussion with other Unitarian Universalists interested in meditation, mindfulness and/or Buddhism. Home stays will be available. For further information and to be added to the email list contact Terry Kinsey at [mindful@unitytemple.org](mailto:mindful@unitytemple.org).

To register follow this Link: <https://goo.gl/forms/7HOY1dXs90EYbAWE2>

## Roadside Clean-up



On earth day (April 22nd) after Church Sheila Haman, Ted Davenport, Nancy Schuldt, Doug Dufford, Charlene Thompson, and Laura Dufford, who took the photo, picked up garbage on the Church's section of Highway 78 south of Stockton. It was a beautiful day and 4 bags of trash were collected on the 1 mile stretch.

## Italian Dinner/Concert Was A Huge Success



Our first dinner/concert/fundraiser of the year on April 21, was a huge success! At least 124 people attended and we made around \$2500!! Pretty incredible! What a night!! A huge thanks to Chef Michael Staver who spent HOURS in the kitchen preparing for a dinner magnifico. There were many raves about the delicious food from our guests. Jim Mantey provided an 'easy to listen to' concert for the attendees' enjoyment. There are SO many thank you's that need to be said. This was definitely a U.U. team event. Joan Metzger was the master of the 'coordination' team, with significant help from Sheila Haman & Laurie Wurster. The advertising team of Nancy Schuldt, Alice Erikson, Lee Anderson, and Carol Risinger were awesome. Laurie and Mark Haman did an outstanding job tracking ticket sales. Michael's food preppers were especially helpful during the week. Jeanie McKewan's flower arrangements brought a wonderful touch of spring and elegance to our dining room. There were so many others that contributed time, suggestions, kitchen help, money, desserts, and all the behind the scenes, to make this event successful. Thanks to everyone!! It took all of you to accomplish this great task. And to think we made all that money and even had some fun... Who knows what's in store for this lively little church?!

And a very special thanks goes to Judy Hedden who quickly sewed up some nifty green aprons for the kitchen crew to wear. It was Judy's great idea and she was able to have the aprons ready in time for the event. What a great way to show off our UU-ism and look spiffy at the same time. These aprons will be available for our future functions as well. Thanks Judy for your time and talent!!

In appreciation,

Laura Dufford, Chief Instigator

## SATELLITE SERVICE in FREEPORT! – Sunday, May 6, 2018



**UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST**  
CHURCH OF STOCKTON, IL  
Love is our spirit and service our mission. All are welcome here.  
[uuchurchofstockton.org](http://uuchurchofstockton.org)

Join us at a special service in Freeport!  
**SUNDAY, MAY 6 • 10:30 AM**  
**Parkview - 1711 W. Church St**  
*(watch for the pink directional signs; fully accessible)*

Don't miss a special, spirited  
and thought-provoking service entitled,  
**"Nothing But the Truth"**  
led by Rev. Armida Alexander,  
followed by coffee and conversation.

We are a loving, open-minded church -  
diverse in faith, history, and spirituality, but aligned  
in our desire to make a difference for the good.  
We stand on the side of love, justice, and peace.

*If you cannot join us on May 6, please consider  
coming to Stockton on any other Sunday at 10:30 a.m.*

We are located just south of Rt. 20 at  
219 N. Pearl, Stockton, IL 61085  
*The church is wheelchair accessible via the rear parking lot.*

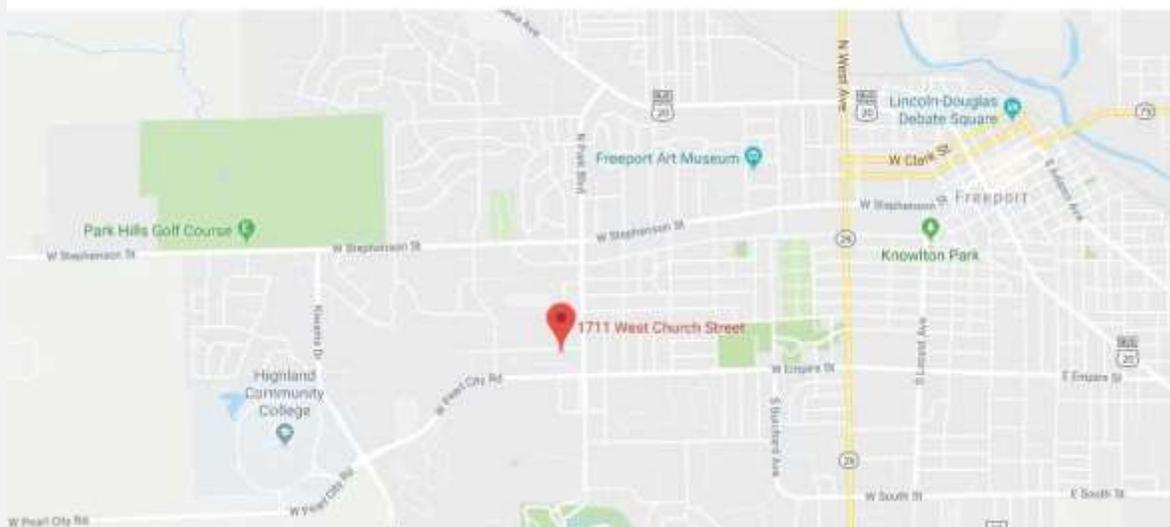
ACE ENGLISH PHOTO

We will be holding our second off-site service on Sunday, May 6 in Freeport! It will be held at Parkview, 1711 W. Church St., located near the corner of Park Blvd. and Pearl City Rd. The service will be held in the handicap accessible all-purpose room adjacent to the parking lot. Please look for the pink directional signs!

Please attend! 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. We are advertising the event with on line and print as well as articles in the Journal Standard. Posters will be placed around the area as well. If you have any questions or need a ride, please contact Sheila at 815-777-0493 or any of the Board members.

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

1711 W Church St



## **Touchstones theme for May – Beloved Community**

Please join us on Sunday, May 13 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! Additional 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 date and location TBA!

### **Looking for new UU Hymns !**

The UUMN (Unitarian Universalist Musician's Network) biannually presents a competition in honor of Vincent B. Silliman, whose work in the middle half of the 20th Century helped shape Unitarian Universalist hymnody. There are cash prizes (1st Place \$1000, 2nd Place \$500, 3rd Place \$250), and the winners plus 9 honorable mentions will be featured during a reading session at the UUMN Conference in Portland, OR, August 1 - 5, 2018.

Detailed guidelines and application form can be found at <http://www.uumn.org/page/silliman>

The deadline for submissions is April 30th. Questions can be directed to [silliman@uumn.org](mailto:silliman@uumn.org).

## **Worship Committee Report - A Variety of Services for May**

You won't want to miss any of the services that we have lined up for May.

May 6. We will be meeting at the usual time, but not at the usual place. This Sunday we will be holding a satellite service at Parkview in Freeport. The address is 1711 W. Church Street. Carpooling from the church will be available for anyone who wants to share a ride. See details about this special service in another article in the newsletter.

May 13. It's Mother's Day. Come to hear the words Armida has to share with us on this traditional day to celebrate motherhood.

May 20. On this Sunday come hear our guest speaker, Rev. Annie Holmes. Rev. Holmes has been a UU minister for 25 years. Serving 8 of those years in Roseburg Oregon. Since her retirement she has been preaching in churches around Illinois and Wisconsin. Her sermon, "Learning at Humility's Knee" promises to be an inspiration to all.

May 27. It's Memorial Day Weekend. If you're thinking about not coming to church, you might want to rethink that. Our guest speaker is Stanley Campbell. Stan is the Executive Director of Rockford Urban Ministries. He will share his reflections on war and peace from the perspective of a Vietnam veteran.

As they say, "See you in church"!

## CALENDAR- MAY 2018

**Sunday, May 6** 10:30 a.m. in Freeport — *Nothing But the Truth*, an exploration of the nature of truth, how to judge its claims, and where we might find it amid all the opinions that vie for our loyalty. Rev. Armida, Joan Harmet at the piano. Everyone join us at Parkview for this visit to what we hope will become a satellite congregation!

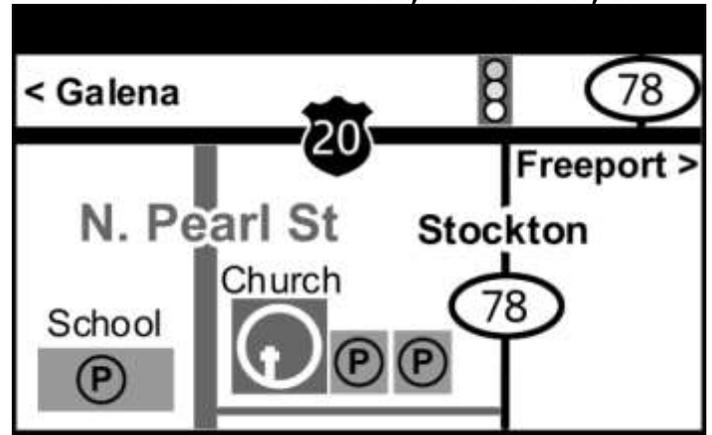
**Sunday, May 13**, 10:30 a.m. *Her Mothership*, being a contemplation of the role of mothers in today's world, along with a consideration of the archetype of the Great Mother herself. Rev. Armida.  
Before the service: 9:15 a.m. Touchstones!  
Everyone welcome.

**Sunday, May 20**, 10:30 a.m. Our guest speaker, Rev. Annie Holmes

**Sunday, May 27**, 10:30 a.m. Our guest speaker is Stanley Campbell

## CHURCH INFORMATION

**219 N PEARL STREET, STOCKTON, IL**



Wheel chair parking and elevator access is available from the rear parking lot.  
Sunday Services at 10:30 AM  
Rev. Armida Alexander  
UUChurchOfStockton.org  
Facebook.com/UUChurchOfStockton  
uustockton@gmail.com