

# Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ames



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## Sunday services 10 a.m.

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### **6** *Flower Communion*

THE REV. DR. BRIAN ESLINGER

Flowers, with their inherent beauty and symbolic vitality, play a part in many religious traditions, including ours. On this Sunday, we'll enjoy flowers from their roots to their blooms as we participate in our annual flower communion. *Please bring a flower (or a bunch) to share as part of our communion service. An all-congregational photo will be taken outside immediately after the service.*

### **13** *One More Story to Tell*

THE REV. DR. BRIAN ESLINGER

Indulging myself in this final Sunday with the Fellowship, I'll share my favorite stories, both of our 13-year journey together and from the folk traditions that have informed my theology and ministry.

### **20** *Finding the Balance*

TAMMY HARTMANN

Throughout the cycles of the Earth, we are physically and emotionally affected by the seasonal changes. The summer solstice is a time for finding a way to celebrate balance and harmony, exploring ways that internal reflection and personal rituals help us to find and maintain both.

### **27** *Summer Reading*

GRETA ANDERSON & OTHERS

Looking for summer reading that is enriching as well as entertaining? Members of the Sunday Morning Program Committee profile seven recent works that illuminate UUFA principles in refreshing new ways. Don't miss the service handout featuring further reading recommendations, and come with your own recommendation for fellow UUs.

## **July 4** *Voices of Democracy*

LINDA BARNES & AMY SLAGELL

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*From the minister*

### **Thanks mingle with reflections about what's next for each of us**

Thank you.

That's the most important message I have in this final newsletter column. Thank you for the moving tribute on Friday, May 14. Thank you for the gifts that all symbolically honored what matters so much to me and my family. Thank you for the kind words and humorous ones and those sung with such emotion by the Fellowship Voices.

Thank you for the emeritus status. I feel incredibly humble and hopeful that I can live up to your sentiments!

Most importantly, thank you for allowing me to walk with you for the past 13 years. It's a journey that has shaped me in so many ways. I have been so very fortunate to have landed in

a congregation where our ideals usually have been extremely sympathetic to one another and where you have given me the freedom to explore the concepts and opportunities that nurture me.

Now our journeys go their own directions. It's the right time — or as right a time as could be. As you probably know, Lisa and I will be remaining in Ames.

In my changing role as a community minister, I will be teaching at Iowa State in the Religious Studies Department, continuing my work at Youth & Shelter Services and hoping to find a niche within AMOS in which I can be of service.

*Continued next page*



**Minister** / from previous page

This means that the odds of seeing each other around town are fairly good. My leaving the Fellowship does not mean I've become banished. I cannot attend services in Ames, since you need to have a chance to accept your interim and called ministers as your ministers without my ghost lingering in the room.

If you see me around town, you don't need to cross the street or avert your eyes. I'm looking forward to people answering my "How are you doing?" with news about family and life.

I hope that you can find topics to discuss that don't include the Fellowship. I really need distance from what's happening there, and you need to celebrate and vent regarding changes in the Fellowship with those who can join with you unreservedly.

I may also be present at district and other UU events since I will be associated with the Des Moines congregation as its community minister. My role in Des Moines will be very different than the one I have

had with you.

Here is an excerpt from the covenant created by the Rev. Mark Stringer and me and approved by the Des Moines board:

"The primary arena of the Rev. Dr. Brian Eslinger's community ministry will be in teaching religious-studies courses and working in the larger community, specifically in areas of community development and social justice. It is understood that Rev. Eslinger's ministry is an extension of our congregation's outreach to make known the principles and values of Unitarian Universalism in the larger community."

This covenant does not include or imply any financial remuneration, but I firmly believe in congregational polity and that, to be a Unitarian Universalist minister, I must have a community of accountability and a place to call home. The Des Moines congregation has been kind enough to allow me to affiliate with it. Lisa and I will make Des Moines our home congregation.

To reiterate the conclusion of my annual report: "While I am grateful for what we've accomplished during

the past decade and a third, I also look back with regret on missed opportunities, broken relationships, and mistakes. My hope is those whom I've let down will let the blame leave with me and renew their bonds to the Fellowship. Mistakes aside, we have had a remarkable 13 years together, for which I am very grateful."

This is your Fellowship; it is your congregation. I have been privileged to be its caretaker and your storykeeper and teller. Those roles move on to another who will bring skills and gifts I lack, as well as lack some that I have. I am certain that you will treat your new ministers with the kindness and professionalism I have experienced during my time with you.

Always remember that this congregation has an important mission, both in the lives of its members and in the larger community; you have an excellent staff and leaders who will help you make those ideals real. Hold fast to that mission, and you will continue to reshape our world.

Thank you for the privilege of serving as your minister.

— Brian

**Kitty Fisher recognized as Steward of Partnership**

Kitty Fisher has been named a Steward of Partnership by the UU Partner Church Council and will be recognized at General Assembly in Minneapolis. This award, created to mark the 20-year anniversary of the U.S.-Transylvania program, recognizes "that long-term partnerships do not automatically sustain themselves."

Before coming to Ames, Kitty was active with another congregation's partnership program, and she has made four trips to Transylvania. Her tireless work in Ames has elevated our congregation's understanding of what partnership means and has helped sustain our ties to our partners in Tordátfalva.

— Brenda Witherspoon

**To view the June calendar,  
follow this link.**

**To print the June calendar,  
use the print button at the top right corner  
of the larger calendar.**

**You will be able to change  
the font size and orientation.**

**This will give you the most up-to-date listing  
of events.**

## Office responsibilities divided now that office is more fully staffed

With the division of the Fellowship's office administration into two positions, members have begun asking how the responsibilities are split and what support for program staff and committees is built into the job descriptions.

Lisa Harmison, our office administrator, started work Feb. 15. Her position is 20 hours per week through June and will increase to 25 hours per week in July. Diana Crosswait, our projects coordinator, started work May 3. Her position is 15 hours a week.

The position of office administrator is designed to be the primary office presence, keeping regular office hours and acting as the front line for most inquiries. Lisa handles the orders of service, the weekly e-mail, all building use and calendaring, and routine database updating, among other tasks.

The position of projects coordinator is designed to handle office financial tasks, as well as those bigger projects that recur monthly or annually. The bulk of Diana's annual schedule is already filled with existing projects that affect the entire congregation. These include handling the weekly deposit and electronic-funds transfers, pledge tracking, producing the monthly newsletter, and tackling a host of once-a-year projects such as the membership directory, annual contribution statements, pledge-season support, and the annual report, among others. The office is working toward adoption of new database software, and the transition to a new system is also likely to fill a good part of Diana's plate during the changeover.

The newly created [projects@uufames.org](mailto:projects@uufames.org) e-mail address will go straight to Diana.

Several folks have already inquired whether our projects coordinator would be available to take the lead on specific projects envisioned by committees. The position, though, is not designed for our volunteer program leaders to hand off tasks that have always resided with committees, and it does not have enough hours built in to take on such things.

In fact, one clear Fellowship need is centralized responsibility for keeping our website information updated and consistent, and neither of our two office staff positions has enough wiggle room to incorporate that function. At the moment, we also do not have a volunteer dedicated to that effort, either.

As we sort through the questions that will inevitably arise as we fully implement the new staffing structure, Lisa and Diana will be open to your questions about who handles existing office tasks, as well as whether there's an appropriate role for office staff in new Fellowship endeavors. Those decisions will be made in collaboration with the interim minister and the rest of the program staff.

If you're unsure which person to talk to about a given concern, start with Lisa, who can be reached at the main office number (515-292-5960) or through the [uufa@uufames.org](mailto:uufa@uufames.org) e-mail address.

— Brenda Witherspoon

## Shall we make peace?

Peacemaking provides a way for congregations to affirm the desire to affect how we interact with the world on personal, communal, and national levels.

By engaging in such a process, we can incorporate peacemaking as an integral part of our mission and day-to-day congregational life.

At our Mother's Day service, I proposed that the Fellowship explore how it could be active as a peacemaking congregation.

On June 1, those interested in discussing this possibility are invited to join me at 7 p.m. in the Tower Room.

Peace is not a destination but a process. Shall we begin the process?

— the Rev. Dr. Brian Eslinger

## Grant will allow national distribution of minister's collection of seasonal plays

The Rev. Dr. Brian Eslinger's collection of scripts, *Winter Play: Scripts to Inspire Seasonal Celebrations*, will be widely distributed to Unitarian Universalist districts and congregations, thanks to a \$3,000 grant from the Unitarian Sunday School Society.

The book was created two years ago, but options for spreading the word were limited without a budget. The grant will pay to produce and mail 300 copies of the book, plus advertising in the fall edition of *UUWorld* magazine and in some online outlets. Congregations that request printed copies will receive them; the remainder of the books will be distributed in the fall to congregations most likely to be able to make use of them.

Marketing efforts will also direct people to the UUFA website, where they will be able to download electronic copies of the collection of scripts.

During his 13 years at the Fellowship, Brian wrote all the adapted and original scripts in the book and directed UUFA youth in Christmas Eve productions of the plays. They include *Good King Wenceslas*, *La Befana*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Saint George and the Dragon*, *The Scottish Shepherd's Story*, and *The Tailor of Gloucester*.

— Brenda Witherspoon

*From the president*

## Summer marks transitions for ministry, board leadership

It's here.

That transition we've been talking about since November is upon us. All these months, we knew it was coming, but we also knew that it was months away. And now it's not months away.

It's June.

And it's time for Brian and Lisa and Thomas to leave us.

Brian's last two Sundays in the pulpit will be June 6 and 13. Then he'll be out of the office, except for critical caring needs, until he officially leaves at the end of July. If you have a caring need during this time, please e-mail the Caring Network at [caring@uufames.org](mailto:caring@uufames.org), or call Lisa Harmison at the UUFA office (515-292-5960).

Brian did his leave-taking with the same forethought and honor and dignity that he used in his 13 years as our minister.

He gave us plenty of time to prepare for his leaving. He gave us plenty of room to prepare for it. And he gave us plenty to think about as we move toward our future.

He also gave us an opportunity to throw quite a party to celebrate his time with us. On May 14, we laughed, we cried, and we honored him with simple gifts and minister emeritus status.

That transition has spawned another transition, one that follows naturally. The UUFA Board voted at its May meeting to hire the Rev. Charlotte Cowtan as our interim minister.

I think our search committee hit the jackpot on this one. Charlotte comes to us with loads of experience in interim ministry, as a settled minister, and as a district executive.

We will be her fifth interim ministry. She has served the Edmonds (Wash.) Unitarian Universalist Church since August. Before that, she served as interim minister for the Unitarian Congregation of Don

Heights in Toronto, Ontario; for the First Unitarian Congregational Society in Brooklyn, N.Y.; and for the First Universalist Church of Minneapolis. And before that, she served the Unitarian Universalist Church of Flint, Mich., as a settled minister for 12 years.

In between those ministries, she served as district executive of the Michigan and Ohio Valley Districts, which merged to form the Heartland District of the UUA in 2000.

But that's just résumé stuff, albeit very good résumé stuff.

Talk to her for five minutes. Or for an hour, like I did, and you'll sense the passion, the knowledge, and the work ethic that she is bringing to our Fellowship.

I knew – theoretically – what the work of the interim minister and the congregation is during this interim period. After talking with Charlotte, though, I have a much better sense of what needs to be done, at least in the first few months, and am excited about moving forward with that work.

And make no mistake, she'll put you to work. I called her just to welcome her as our new interim minister, and, by the time I got off the phone with her, I had more than enough things to do.

And make no mistake, it's gonna be fun. "If it wasn't fun, I wouldn't be doing it," Charlotte said. And I believe her.

Charlotte is champing at the bit. She wants to meet as many of us as she can in the next few months. She hopes to meet our delegates at General Assembly in June. She'll be in Ames immediately after General Assembly to find lodging and see the sites. And if you miss her then, you can meet her when she arrives for good in mid-August.

Her first job then, she says, is to be a sponge, soaking up as much

knowledge about the Fellowship as she possibly can. She'll be talking to people and studying annual meeting minutes and board meetings minutes and financial reports and archives and anything else that will help her figure out who we are.

She'll have the help of a seven-member interim transition team that the board will begin to identify at its June meeting.

Much of the next two years will be spent figuring out who we are and who we want to be, getting to where we want to be, and then finding the right person to meet our needs as a called minister. So remember, this time of transition is a time to transcend.

As far as transitions go, this one would be rated – as far as importance and relative rarity – at the top of the transition meter. A little lower on that transition scale is the transition from one president and one board to another.

That usually happens July 1 each year, but it will be happening a little sooner – whether it's considered official or not – this year. Starting June 10, Vice President Deb Kline will take over day-to-day leadership before officially becoming president July 1.

Deb's experience in serving both the UUFA and the Prairie Star District in so many ways and her business-like way of going about making decisions ensures that she will be superb at leading this Fellowship during the next year.

As my time as UUFA president comes to a close, I once again return to the realization that I always gain more than I give when I work with others. And I've had a great time serving the Fellowship. I thank you all for giving me this opportunity.

It's been fun. And that's something that's important to Brian, to Charlotte, to me, and I hope to all of you.

— *Mark Witherspoon*

# ENVIRONMENTAL



Green Corner

## Climate refugees likely to span all continents, models predict

Global warming, coming on stronger and faster than expected, has already caused some 25 million climate refugees, according to the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change.

People around the world are losing their homes, their livelihoods, and all too often their lives by rising seas, encroaching deserts, and severe storms. The Environmental Justice Foundation estimates that 300,000 deaths each year are due to climate change.

Already, higher oceans have forced residents of low-lying islands to evacuate the Cateret Islands off Papua New Guinea, coastal areas of the Maldiv Islands in the Indian Ocean, and Bangladesh's Bhola Island. Agricultural land is being destroyed in some low-lying coastal areas by salt deposition as oceans advance inland.

The Inupiat village of Shismaref on the Alaskan island of Sanchef is being evacuated as residents move to higher ground to escape the erosion caused by rising waters. The island nations of Tuvalu and Kiribati in the Pacific, gradually sinking beneath the waves, are making evacuation plans with Australia and New Zealand.

Mass human migrations will occur as ocean levels rise between 1 and 2 meters this century. Ten percent of humanity lives within a 10-meter rise of the oceans. Eastern China,

the Mekong and Irrawaddy Deltas in Southeast Asia, Bangladesh, the Nile Delta of Egypt, northwestern Europe, the coasts of the Gulf of Mexico, and the East Coast of North America are all vulnerable.

Vast global flooding would catastrophically impact food and water supplies, transportation infrastructure, and major cities around the world.

Advancing deserts in northwestern China threaten 150 million people with loss of their homes and lands. Super dust storms, dropping water tables, and encroaching sand have left residents of Gansu Province no choice but to be resettled.

Desertification in the African Sahel, south of the Sahara Desert, has driven millions from their lands leading to ethnic violence in Niger, Cote d'Ivoire, and Sudan. Much of southern Africa may become too dry to raise corn.

During the 21st century, areas of extreme drought may expand to as much as 30 percent of the earth's land surface, compared with 3 percent today, according to the Hadley Centre for Climate Prediction and Research in the United Kingdom.

The United States is not exempt from its own climate refugees. The Southwest will become extremely hot and dry, threatening the viability of Las Vegas and Phoenix. Water problems will become intolerable as

rivers become dry or intermittent and aquifers are depleted.

The Southeast will become dryer and hotter with the added threats of more severe hurricanes and rising seas. South Florida and much of the Gulf Coast will be flooded. Particularly at risk are the elderly and impoverished of some 60 counties in Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Texas, Louisiana, and South Carolina, according to Oxfam America.

Food production will drop as the Plains states become hotter and dryer. The Great Lakes will diminish. The Northeast will receive considerably more precipitation, much in heavy downpours.

Cities along the Eastern seaboard, including New York, Baltimore, and Miami, will be flooded to some degree.

We Americans, after two centuries of burning coal, oil, and natural gas, have emitted far more greenhouse gas than any other country. On average, each one of us emits about 19 tons of carbon dioxide each year, compared with Indians and Africans at 1 ton each.

Aiding others around the world to mitigate and adapt to climate change will reduce the numbers of climate refugees and help us all.

—*Jackson Harper*  
Green Sanctuary Digest, April 23  
(published with permission)

**The June 13, service, *One More Story to Tell*, will be held in Fellowship Hall.**

This is a change from a plan announced earlier to hold the service  
at Emma McCarthy Lee Park.

**The program will be the final Sunday service  
the Rev. Dr. Brian Eslinger will lead as our minister.**

# RE & YOUTH NEWS

## Middle school OWL

Many thanks to Suzanne Zilber and Rolf Koford for facilitating a class of 21 middle school students through the Our Whole Lives sexuality curriculum.

This class met on Sunday evenings each week from January through May 9. And thanks to the parents who made such a commitment for their students' regular attendance at this class. The last session of this class was a parent/student fishbowl discussion, a great way for parents and students to hear that we all think human sexuality is an important topic for our continuing emotional, physical and spiritual growth.

## Middle school Coming of Age

Students who will be in grade 7 or grade 8 in the fall are making plans this summer for participating in the next UUFA Coming of Age program.

At the initial meeting, students were given instructions to find mentors for themselves in the next month or two.

If you are asked to be a mentor, here is what you should consider before saying "yes." Being a mentor involves attending two overnight retreats at the YMCA Camp near Boone, joining one Wednesday

evening forum each month, and participating in monthly field visits to area religious communities (Hindu temple, Jewish synagogue, Muslim mosque, Christian church, UUFA meditation group, etc.).

It also requires helping students complete their COA booklets, a task that requires conversations about the students' and mentors' spiritual paths and practices, as well as involvement in UUFA service projects and other activities planned by mentors and students, with the students' parental approval.

To be a mentor, you must: be 25 or older, be the same gender as the student you mentor, and be an active member or friend of the UUFA. Also, you must not be the parent of a student who will be in the COA program.

It is helpful if you feel comfortable with where you are as a Unitarian Universalist, willing to share, appropriately, about your life's path that has brought you to Unitarian Universalism. Having clear and strong personal boundaries and being able to empathize but not fix the problems in the life of an early teen is critical, too.

There is a \$140 participation fee (to cover the YMCA Camp activities) required of both youth and adult participants. Confidential scholarships are available to youth and adult

participants. If you are approached by one of our 21 participants, please consider this information. If you would like to be a mentor but have not been contacted by a youth, please contact Lori Allen ([dycm@uufames.org](mailto:dycm@uufames.org)) to see whether there is a mentorship available for you.

## Teen child-care providers, parent supervision needed

Any youth who has participated in the teen child-care provider orientation in the past is welcome to participate in supervision and facilitation of the elementary summer program for children ages 4-11. Teens are paid \$8 per hour for their assistance.

If you are a parent of a child who will be participating in the summer program, please sign up to be the adult supervisor once or twice during the summer. The adult supervisor makes certain there is a safe child/teen ratio and is available to assist when and if needed.

See the signup list inside the stairway leading to the RE spaces, or contact Lori Allen ([dycm@uufames.org](mailto:dycm@uufames.org)) for more information or to sign up via e-mail. You can also see the signup list on the UUFA website under the Children and Families tab.

— Lori Allen

# ODDS & ENDS

## Regrets needed for service

Regrets, I've had a few ...

This summer, Andrew Williams will give a Sunday morning presentation on regrets. The goals of this presentation are to explore the various concepts of regret and its emotional use, then lead a process for those in the congregation to release themselves of unhealthy regret.

Andrew needs your help. He is

collecting brief stories that involve regrets. If you would like to share a story, please email him ([Andrew@HowDoYouCompare.com](mailto:Andrew@HowDoYouCompare.com)).

All submissions will be treated with strict confidence and will be used solely to illustrate the situations UU members have encountered. If you have an interesting, emotional, or thought-provoking story of regret, please send Andrew an e-mail.

— Andrew Williams

## General Assembly liaison

Although not attending General Assembly himself, Sam Wormley has agreed to help coordinate delegates and carpooling go this year's GA meeting in the Twin Cities.

If you are planning to attend GA this year, please let Sam know (515-296-2627, [swormley1@gmail.com](mailto:swormley1@gmail.com)).

Thanks.

— Sam Wormley



From the director of youth and children's ministries

## Brian's collegial presence, perspective will be missed

*Ubuntu – I am because you are, you are because I am ... A Deep African Way of Being.*

It seemed I was under a large sky on the night of May 14 as I held my new granddaughter, Mica Jane Allen, in my arms in Carbondale, Ill., while thinking of the Life of Brian celebration back in Iowa at the UUFA.

I knew it would be a fun celebration of Brian's ministry. I wished for the opportunity to have a memory of being a part of the congregation's farewell for him.

But I felt a stronger calling to be with my daughter and her family, to be part of the welcoming presence that surrounded Mica during her first weeks on the planet.

I got to hold that little baby so much while my daughter finished two papers and took one final just one week after giving birth.

There is nothing quite like the first few days with new babies, studying every miniature feature of their faces while they sleep, listening to the small squawks and squeaks as they begin to evolve into full voices.

Holding Mica in my arms, it seemed as if I was holding and old friend, someone I'd known my whole life. It still seems that it is quite impossible that she has, that all my grandchildren have, arrived — ready to grow into who they are supposed to be. When it comes to family, I've embraced the understanding of Ubuntu.

When it comes to some friends and colleagues, such as Brian, Ubuntu is also a way of defining relationship. I have known Brian, at least casually, for most of the time he's been the minister here at the Fellowship

Before I came to Ames, my Prairie Star District religious education colleagues and I were always a bit envious of the UUFA religious

### Summer RE Calendar

Supervision, which may include stories, drama, games, outside play, or crafts, will be available during the summer Sunday programs for children who will enter kindergarten through fifth grade in the fall. (Children younger than this may remain in the nursery for the summer; children who are older may attend the service or be employed as child-care providers or nursery helpers if they have completed the orientation.) On holiday weekends in the summer, only nursery care will be offered. Here is the tentative schedule:

June 6	Elementary summer program & nursery care
June 13	Brian's last Sunday, all-congregation service, nursery care only
June 20-27	Elementary summer program & nursery care
July 4	Fourth of July holiday, nursery care only
July 11-25	Elementary summer program & nursery care
August 1-29	Elementary summer program & nursery care
Sept. 5	Labor Day holiday, nursery care only

educators who got to work with Brian. At district gatherings, he was always so friendly, never taking himself too seriously.

His genuine interest in other's stories, his attentive listening, and his authentic sharing of his own journey made him popular with everyone. He was fun to be with! And, of course there were the stories ...

I was so delighted to come to Ames in 2007 to work for the Fellowship. I was eager to be Brian's colleague. Working with Brian was all I'd hoped for and more. His inclusive way of working when planning and facilitating intergenerational services has been wonderful.

Knowing that there was a staff person who would step in to help me with the youth and the elementary summer program was great. Experiencing his leadership of the Boston trip last year has given me confidence that this trip can continue, mostly the same.

While I'll miss the work that we have done together — music, storytelling, spaghetti dinners, Sunday programs — it is the conversations

that happen occasionally that will be most difficult to go without.

I will especially miss his kind and tempered responses to my questions and proposals. I suspect that there have been times when he wanted to respond to my questions or statements with "What?! Are you serious?!" But instead, he makes eye contact, nods his head and says, "Uh huh, yeah. Maybe. Let's think of all the ways we can look at this."

Then it seems that, through his questioning me, I come around to the answer or solution that I probably already knew was right. Maybe not the one I came in with but the one that fit the best after some thoughtful reflection.

I suspect I am not the only one at the Fellowship who has had this kind of creative interchange with Brian. I will miss this. I will miss him.

Thanks, Brian, not only for being here for the UUFA for 13 years but for being you. Keep being yourself, and we'll do the same. Ubuntu Brian, Ubuntu.

See you around.

— Lori

# COMMITTEES & GROUPS, SOCIAL JUSTICE

## CONSCIENTIOUS CRAFTERS

No regular meetings during the summer, but watch for announcement of a field trip and for a picnic and stitching occasion at dates to be announced.

We've talked of doing a Sunday service at the Fellowship exploring the activities that feed our passions, be they hobbies or gainful employment. That possibility is still up in the air and depends a good deal on the schedule and plans of our new interim minister. We'll keep everyone posted by e-mail.

If you want to be on our e-mail list, please notify Mary Richards (maryrich@isunet.net). Check [www.uufames.org](http://www.uufames.org) for photos of crafters crafting.

— Mary Richards

## DUSTIN BERGER MEMORIAL LIBRARY

*The Indian Way* is a book in our children's collection for ages 8 and older about learning to communicate with Mother Earth. Author Gary McLain (*Eagle/Walking Turtle*) tells the full-moon stories his grandfather told him. There are also suggested experiences you can do that relate to each story. As McLain explains, "By starting with ourselves, we can reach out to the whole world and make it better for all living things."

— Barb Abbott

## The little bUUKshop

The bUUKshop is now closed for the summer, except for special requests.

Contact Donna Lutz, Mary Richards, or Mary Sawyer if you'd like to purchase something or browse the inventory before August.

Remember: We have lots of neat stuff in addition to books, and all proceeds benefit the Fellowship. Thanks to those folks who have made suggestions for inventory.

— Mary Richards

## UU YOGA

The UU Yoga group has changed its meeting time to 7:15 p.m. Sundays to accommodate Sunday afternoon activities. The group will not meet June 6.

Please join us on Sunday evenings for an hour of stretching, breathing, and relaxation — a perfect way to end the weekend. All levels are welcome, including those that have never tried yoga.

Bring a yoga mat and a large blanket. Contact Karen Bates (515-231-9311, [batesandbrown@gmail.com](mailto:batesandbrown@gmail.com)) for more information.

— Karen Bates

## WOMEN'S BOOK GROUP

The Women's Book Group will meet at 7 p.m. Monday, June 7, in the Tower Room.

Our final book of this discussion series is *Desert Pilgrim* by Mary Swander.

From [www.maryswander.com](http://www.maryswander.com): "Injured in a car accident, Swander made a pilgrimage to New Mexico, where she sought the aid of traditional Hispanic and Native American healers in her recovery.

"In Albuquerque, she encountered Father Sergei, a Russian Orthodox monk whose barrio church is hidden away on the once-proud Route 66, now the terrain of crack dealers and the homeless.

"In his backyard, Father Sergei grew herbs for the curandera, Lu, in the pharmacy across the street. Lu's herbal cures are legendary.

"These two healers led Swander through the 'dark night of the soul' to look inside herself and to the Divine for strength and meaning.

"Lu took Swander on a trip into the New Mexico landscape to harvest herbs and return with a more profound sense of desert spirituality."

This book is available at Big Table Books and at Barnes & Noble and Amazon online.

Please join us for another great evening. We will not be meeting in July or August but will resume our book group the second Monday of September and first Mondays October through June.

— Barbi Greenlaw

## June's offering split: GRIPS (Great Relationships in Pairs)

This month's recipient of our collection split is the youth mentoring program of Youth & Shelter Services, GRIPS (Great Relationships in Pairs).

GRIPS mentors work with elementary and middle school students who are referred to the program by a teacher or counselor, a family member, or themselves for a variety of reasons that may include academic difficulty, social challenges or issues affecting life at home.

The program's outcome data show that, like all young people, our mentees benefit significantly from having a fun and special one-on-one relationship with a caring adult. The mentoring relationship is a mutual commitment to a longterm friendship that develops through weekly 30-50 minute meetings.

For elementary students, sessions take place at school and might involve lunch, board games, work on a craft project, sports or time just for chatting. Middle school students and their mentors meet at a time and place of their own choosing to enjoy an activity of their

choice. The program also sponsors additional learning opportunities for mentors and group activities for mentors and mentees, such as game nights, free tickets to athletic events, and annual mentoring recognition banquets.

For more information or an application form so you can become a mentor, contact the Mentoring Programs Manager (515-232-4332, ext. 4452). Mentors receive ongoing support via in-services and newsletters, as well as periodic contact with the mentoring facilitator.

— the Rev. Dr. Brian Eslinger

*Each month, half the Sunday offerings not designated as pledge payments are given to a local, national, or international organization that serves disadvantaged people and communities or advances other goals.*

*If you have an organization you feel deserves the Fellowship's support, contact Greta Anderson ([gretagarten@gmail.com](mailto:gretagarten@gmail.com)).*

## SOCIAL JUSTICE

### Bequest money dispersed locally through small grants

Several years ago, the Fellowship experienced an unexpected windfall: a large bequest from a member who had since moved on to a different community. The bulk of this bequest allowed us to purchase the adjacent property and begin planning for parking-lot expansion.

At an annual meeting, our congregation voted to devote a small portion of the funds, \$7,000, to social-justice causes.

Last year, the Social Justice Committee was reinvigorated with the purpose of spending this money. Wanting to do so thoughtfully, we engaged in wide-ranging conversations about projects we could do and the philosophies behind them. We found several areas of mutual interest: helping children, especially helping them experience the solace of nature and gardening; helping refugees and other foreign women in the community out of their isolation; addressing mental health needs in the community; making connections between our culture and others, especially in relation to corporate control of agriculture; and improving democratic participation in our culture.

Out of these conversations came Emotions Anonymous (a 12-step group that meets at the Fellowship

every Saturday), the Boys and Girls Club garden (now in its second year), and a proposal for a trip to the Yucatan (part of the Green Sanctuary proposal). One of our members also received a \$100 scholarship from the fund to attend a training for AMOS.

Finally, this February, we decided to spend the remaining \$6,900 in the local community by an invitational grant procedure. On May 12, with the approval of the Fellowship Board, we awarded the following sums:

**\$415** to Boys and Girls Club projects conducted by our members, including enhancing the garden curriculum with snacks and recipes and hanging banners and drapes to help reduce the sound in the club's game room.

**\$485** to Friends of International Women to develop and host a website so more women can learn about and take advantage of their programs, designed to help women out of social and cultural isolation.

**\$1,250** to the Emergency Residence Project to provide summer experiences for the children in the shelter, including reduced tuition to nature camps and swim passes to the Ames pools.

**\$1,250** to Beyond Welfare to enable that agency to transcribe and

develop 25 interviews of poor and marginalized Story County residents and their allies into a readers' theater performance, *Not Alone 2*. (*Not Alone 1* has already been performed and is available on KHOI's website.)

**\$1,750** to KHOI to pay registration fees for four key organizers to the weeklong annual conference of the National Federation of Community Broadcasters in Minneapolis this June.

**\$1,750** to NAMI to fund a part-time worker to expand the work of a multi-agency task force that is researching possibilities for a peer-led, drop-in mental health center in Ames.

At the same meeting at which the board approved the grants, it officially gave the Social Justice Committee control of a \$1,700 fund once designated for refugee programs but unused for many years. The Social Justice Committee has talked about devoting these funds to the spring Yucatan trip when plans become more developed.

Those on the committee include: Greta Anderson (formerly chair), Rebecca Boss, Kelly Cheney (formerly co-chair, now chair), Sue Jarnagin, Anthony Jeffries, Semakaleng Lebepe-Mazur, Mary Richards, and Mary Sawyer.

— Greta Anderson

### AMOS celebrates fundraiser success, begins work on specific action plans

Thanks to all of you who purchased program ads and attended the AMOS fundraiser, *Working*. There was general agreement that it was a great production that made it most enjoyable to support this successful AMOS effort.

The five research teams — Economic Justice, Environment, Mental Health Services, Resolving Community Conflict, and Youth and Education — are all hard at work

researching their issues or formulating action plans. All could use more hands on deck. Here are the leaders to contact about getting involved:

Economic Justice: Jan Flora (floraj@iastate.edu), Danelda Allen (danelda@earthlink.net).

Environment: Mary Jean & Allan Baker (bakerae@aol.com).

Mental Health Services: Kay Puttock (kay.puttock@gmail.com).

Resolving Community

Conflict: Heather Withers (hwithers@iowatelecom.net)

Youth and Education: Linda Voit (lindavoit@archerserve.com).

— Mary Richards

#### Mental health forum

In preparation for the November elections to the County Board of Supervisors, members of the AMOS Mental Health Issue Team spent

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the last several months conducting research on the funding and delivery of mental-health services in Story County.

Iowa is unlike most other states in that the counties have primary responsibility for mental-health services, which makes the Board of Supervisors extremely influential in

mental-health matters.

The team's efforts culminated May 20 at the AMOS Candidates' Forum, where all five candidates and an audience of more than 100, listened as Kelly Cheney summarized some complex information, relating it movingly to her own contrasting experiences of mental-health services here and in California.

After listening to AMOS members

speak on two other topics, the candidates responded individually about their willingness to commit to the AMOS agenda.

Significantly, they all agreed that, if elected, they would continue to meet with AMOS.

Now, for the future, the team plans to review the results of its research and apply it to legislation at the state level.

— Kay Puttock

Starting this month, the UUFA newsletter will be delivered electronically except by request to the office.

If you require a printed copy to be mailed, please contact Diana Crosswait, projects coordinator and newsletter editor, at 515-292-5960 or projects@uufames.org.

A limited number of printed copies will be available in the office.

## Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ames

June 2010

### Our Mission

*We are a diverse community of caring individuals who come together to provide an environment that nurtures and educates our children, stimulates the study and practice of ethical and liberal religious ideals, supports the creative spirit in us all, and demonstrates concern for the environment and the broader community.*

**Minister:** the Rev. Dr. Brian Eslinger ..... minister@uufames.org – 515-292-8929  
**Director of Youth and Children's Ministries:** Lori Allen ..... dycm@uufames.org – 515-292-5960  
**Music Coordinator:** Paul Ferrone.....music@uufames.org – 515-292-5960  
**Office Administrator:** Lisa Harmison..... uufa@uufames.org – 515-292-5960  
**Projects Coordinator:** Diana Crosswait..... projects@uufames.org – 515-292-5960  
**Caring concerns**..... caring@uufames.org – 515-292-5960

### Officers of the Board

President Mark Witherspoon  
Vice president Deb Kline  
Past president Janet Klaas  
Secretary Ginny Molgaard  
Treasurer Fritz Keinert

### Board Members

Mark Harris through 2010  
Carolyn Heising through 2010  
Steve Martens through 2011  
Jim Ranalli through 2011  
Mimi Wagner through 2010  
Alex Askew youth representative

**Next Board Meeting:**  
**6 p.m. Wednesday, June 2**

The UUFA office is generally open 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday through Thursday. It is closed Fridays.