

# Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ames



December 2010

From the Interim  
Minister

**Page 2**

From the  
President

**Page 2**

Religious  
Education and  
Youth

**Page 4**

Green Corner

**Page 7**

Social  
Responsibility

**Page 8**

Committees &  
Groups

**Page 10**

Caring Network

**Page 12**

Caring Survey

**Included**

For a current  
calendar, see [www.uufames.org](http://www.uufames.org)



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Vol. 17, No. 12

Sunday Services 9:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m.

## **5 *Standing on the Side of Love***

Rev. Charlotte Cowtan, Terry Lowman

Standing on the Side of Love (or SSL) is a UUA campaign based on Unitarian Universalism's First Principle, which affirms and promotes the "inherent worth and dignity of every person." It is a call for congregations to form coalitions to address discrimination in their own communities.

## **12 *Guest Speaker: Gini Courter***

Gini has served as the UUA Moderator (that is the Chief Governance Officer of our denomination) since 2003. Recent attendees to the UUA General Assembly describe her as exceptional! In her professional life, Gini is an Information Technology consultant, author of twenty-eight books, and a nationally recognized speaker on collaboration and productivity software. Join us for this exciting opportunity.

## **19 *Stories of the Season***

Lori Allen

Join Lori Allen and other UUFA members and friends as we share stories of holidays past. Poignant, amusing, funny, and heart warming - these stories and songs will remind us that even though our celebrations at this time of year come from different traditions, the emotions they invoke are universal. This is an **All Congregation Service** for children and adults.

## **24 *5:00 pm Room for a Little One***

Lori Allen

Bring your family and join your UU friends for this interactive Christmas Eve Service, where anyone can become a part of the the pageant. If you're willing, you can be a star, an angel, an animal, or even a wise person. All props and participation prompts will be handed out as the service progresses. There will be a familiar theme to the story and songs that are offered.

## **24 *9:00 pm Lessons, Carols, and Candlelight***

Rev. Charlotte Cowtan

Join us for a UU Friendly Christmas Eve service with traditional carols, readings and candlelight.

## **26 *Reflections on the Spirituality of Returning Stuff You Didn't Really Want in the First Place***

Jess Higgins, Paul Nelson

Is there a "spirituality for returning unwanted stuff" especially during the holidays ?? For instance, did you get another sweater; this one which is too small ?? How about that self-help book that a friend "thought you'd enjoy??" We'll explore this topic in all its serious (and its not so serious) ramifications.

## **A Conversation with Gini Courter**

**Join us on Saturday, December 11, from 4:00 – 6:00 pm.** Come see the UUA Moderator, Chief Governance Officer of our denomination, in action! She is coming here to dialog with our amazing congregation. Come talk with her about how congregations work and how they work together in the Unitarian Universalist tradition. Come ask questions about how we can be more dynamic and powerful within our walls and in our wider community, and how you can play an active role in making this happen! Childcare available by contacting the office by Thursday, December 9. Don't miss this once in a Fellowship-time offer to see Gini live in our midst!

## Charlotte's Web

The holiday season is here once again – that time of year when people in the northern hemisphere respond to the shortened days by finding ways to bring more warmth, light, joy and hope to the world. This is a festive season, full of excitement and good cheer.

But happiness and joy are not distributed equally among us. This is a time of year when we feel the absence of a loved one more acutely, when we tend to over plan and over schedule, when we are likely to stretch ourselves emotionally, physically, and financially. As we enter into this winter holiday season, please remember to be gentle with yourselves – and each other.

As the sun approaches the winter solstice then begins its climb toward summer, as the cardinals pose for photos in the evergreen boughs, as the familiar carols are sung and the candles are lighted - may you open your hearts to the deep power of this season. May you know once again that in the midst of the cold, darkness and despair, there is always new life wanting to be born, a candle waiting to be lighted, and someone reaching out hoping to touch your hands and heart.

I wish you all a peace filled and heart expanding holiday season.

Faithfully,  
Rev. Charlotte Cowtan

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## Greetings from the President

Seasons Greetings, as we enter the winter holiday time with tidings of peace and goodwill! In that spirit, let us extend our peace and goodwill to each other as we continue on our transitional journey and make history together.

How are we making history?

- 1st Flood Relief Emergency Fund Raiser Success: Together we raised \$107,527.30 in 3 weeks! We have proven to ourselves that we have the resources to fund our collective priorities.
- 1st Fellowship Day Visioning Retreat: Over 20% of you participated in generating dreams for our congregation.
- 1st Vision Statement Drafting Team: Writer participants from Fellowship Day will begin crafting a statement for congregational input.
- 1st Collective Establishment of Priorities: Based on Fellowship Day contributions and the subsequent Vision Statement in progress, we will have clear priorities to direct Board decisions.
- 1st Congregational Covenant: The Transition Team will begin facilitating a statement of how we agree to be in community with each other.
- 1st On-line Board Meeting Info: All of the reports, minutes and agendas for the monthly Board meetings are accessible to members on the UUFA website.
- 1st Workshop by UUA Moderator, Gini Courter, at UUFA: Saturday, December 11, from 4:00 – 6:00 pm. Don't miss it!
- 1st of Many More 1st's TBA: Stay tuned! We've only begun to make history.

I hope you will continue to be an active part of the transition process. Please remember to thank those who are leading the way. With their earnest efforts and best intentions they strive to promote the Fellowship we hold dear, and create a clear path to our future.

Blessings to you and yours,  
Deb Kline

**How to find board information on website:** The Board of Directors monthly meeting information is only viewable to members. First you must log in. Then on the left hand menu listing, move your mouse over Board and Committees. You should see a new menu listing to the right under UUFA Board of Directors called Monthly Board Meetings. This page has the current/upcoming board information when it is available. Moving your mouse to the right allows you to select the specific monthly board meeting agenda. The supporting reports for that month are below the agenda.

## Transition Team Update

The Transition Team members send their thanks to the nearly 70 UUFA members and friends who gave the gifts of their time, energy and thoughtful ideas during the Congregational Workshop on October 30, 2010.

We began the process of understanding who we are and where we want to go by looking at the highlights of Fellowship history and hearing Reverend Cowtan's report on the listening interviews she has conducted with over 112 members since her start here in August. You can see the summary chart of Charlotte's findings on the UUFA website. Participants also had the opportunity to hear some critical information about various models for the operational structures of religious communities with a special emphasis on the impact of size on the organizational structures that can make or break a congregation's ability to function well. The whole group then participated in a continuum exercise of questions such as one describing their ideal of a Sunday morning service (from campus type lecture to something entirely worshipful and all points between) and their take on the concept and presence of God. It was engaging to see our diversity from a new perspective. At the same time we could see what we held deeply in common: the principle that we don't all need to stand at one point in such a continuum to form a religious community! Go ahead and ask someone who was able to be there how it all turned out.

After our delicious lunch (thank you to the Coming of Age students and parents, especially the head kitchen team of Sandra Norvell and Christopher Hopkins, and chefs Clay and Jamie Gurganus, for providing the excellent meal!) we took the learning from the morning into our visioning process. Through individual and group work we imagined our experience of the Fellowship five years in the future and began to articulate the first steps we took to reach those goals. The ideas flowed through energetic conversations. Soon short statements were generated, gathered and clustered so that the whole group could look at the vision that was emerging.

The details of all of these ideas were captured in notes and by pictures. There is a recording of the whole day that you can check out from the office to listen to if you like.

What's next? The Transition Team solicited volunteers from the attendees to form a writing team. Ralph Gandy has agreed to head up the writing team, which is composed of Rilla Fox, Carolyn Myers, Andrew Severin and Chris White. Their first task is to sort through the ideas that percolated throughout the afternoon and to create a draft of a vision statement. This draft statement will be circulated to the whole membership via email and postings in the building. In December we plan to hold a hearing where people can ask questions, suggest revision and think further about where we want to head as a community. The writing group will take all of the feedback, work on revisions and, after the first of the year, provide another draft. We'll hold another round of hearings in January and continue the process until consensus to the level of 80% seems to be reached. Our plan is to have a strong sense of our own vision for our community to include in the materials that go into the description of the congregation when the ministerial search process is formally launched in Spring 2011.

### **Survey of Sunday Morning Meeting Time Preferences**

The UUFA Transition Team surveyed preferences for Sunday Morning meeting times starting at the October 30th Congregation Meeting. The preferences are presented in pie charts. If you would like to see numerical data ask any of the Transition Team members to email you the excel spreadsheet.

People ranked options from 1 to 5. The most frequent first preference 46% (41 out of 89 responses) was for 9:00 and 11:00 am meetings, the second most frequent first preference was 27% (24 out of 89) for 9:15 and 11:00 am. For the 5th and most disfavored preference, 49% (14 out of 29 responses) chose 9:30 and 11:30, which is what we have now.

This is only a survey, and not a final vote. Our intention is to spark discussion that leads to wise planning. Talk with others and with Board members about what would work well. The goal is to have a smoothly working system with balanced attendance at the early and late meetings.

Your Transition Team: David Brenner, Charlotte Cowtan, Kitty Fisher, Charlotte Mann, Mary Richards, Amy Slagell, Mark Witherspoon, Sam Wormley

# From the director of youth and children's ministries



## Oh Babies

During this season, I am reminded of the joy and the bliss that usually surrounds the birth of a new baby. Infants are such a hopeful reminder that we are all unique individuals, here on this planet for a life with so many potential paths to take. Which baby will grow up to be a great peace maker? Who will cure the world's diseases? Who will bring beautiful art into our world? Who will live their lives in a way that does not negatively impact our fragile eco system? Who will always have a kind word for their families and friends? Who will show compassion to those who need it? Who will wake up most mornings with a determination to do the best they can in whatever they encounter? How can we know?

Is it really possible that we all came into this world with such great potential? I know, I know. Many children are born into situations that will never allow them to realize who they could fully be. Others are fortunate to come into environments that nurture their every need. Why do some succeed despite such difficult beginnings? Why do some struggle in spite of all they are given? How can each life hold so much potential randomness?

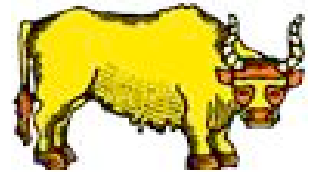
These days I am thinking a lot about randomness. Many of the things I thought could be planned for and predicted, or at least explained, cannot be. It is in this randomness that I am trying to be my usual optimistic self. The success of this practice, being optimistic, is turning out to be, well, random.

And, so, I return to the thoughts of the randomness of babies, of life. During this holiday season, whether you celebrate Chanukah, Christmas, the Solstice, Kwanza or the New Year – I wish for you as little randomness as possible. Happy celebrations to all those who are or were babies.

See you on Sunday  
Lori Allen

## “Room for a Little One” Christmas Eve Service

This year's 5 pm Christmas Eve Service is going to be an interactive event. We'll be telling Martin Waddell's Christmas Eve tale, “Room for a Little One,” in an interactive way. In this story Kind Ox is asked to share his stable home with different animals. Each time one comes along and asks for shelter, the oxen replies, “Come inside. There is always room for a little one.” We'll see how many dogs, cats, and mice we can fit into our stable. And, of course, there will be a donkey with some special visitors seeking a place to stay as well.



## Holiday Workshop for All Ages

Join your UU friends at the Fellowship on Sunday, December 19, from 3:00 – 4:30 pm. We'll be making animal masks, stars, and other props to be used in the Christmas Eve Service AND some holiday decorations for you to take home with you. Cookies, carols, and fun are the order for the afternoon. Come for all or part of this fun event.

## Coming of Age

The COA group had an informational and fun visit to the Iowa Hindu Temple and Cultural Center located just south of Madrid, Iowa. A member of the temple explained the architecture of the building, the gods and goddesses represented there, and some of his thoughts on Hinduism. Hinduism is unique in that it teaches that all the gods and goddesses of all religions are part of the same god. As he explained, if we think of god as water – think of how it changes shape when it is put in different shaped vessels. As he pointed out, the water is still the same, just the shape of it is different depending on the shape of the vessel. This was great food for thought.

On Wednesday, December 8, the COA group will meet at Memorial Lutheran Church at 6:45 pm to attend a mid week advent service. Memorial Lutheran is located at 2228 Lincoln Way. The service will last one hour. We will gather as a group in the lobby and sit together. Mentors and youth are encouraged to attend this event. Then, on Wednesday, December 15, we will meet at the UUFA from 6:30 – 8:30 for our usual monthly forum, where we will discuss the Christian roots of Unitarian Universalism. Watch for emails on these events.

## Space Use Task Force

The UUFA Space Use Task Force was appointed by the UUFA Board of Trustees last month. This group was charged with not only getting the spaces repaired and refurbished after the flood damage of August, but also determining whether our spaces were serving the needs of the UUFA in the best ways possible. Members of this group are Barb Abbott, Andrew Hanft, Kerry Martens, Wes Shank, Brenda Witherspoon, and Lori Allen, staff representative.

The group began by considering who used our building and in what ways. It looked at the needs and patterns of adult members, child and youth members, visitors, staff, lay leaders, and community members who are in and out for one reason or another. A summary of this process and initial conclusions were presented to the board for approval. After the approval, the summary was sent out in an email communication where feedback was requested. The group received feedback from 10 people, and feedback was also solicited from staff.

In this process, the task force was able to discern that there is a desire to make the UUFA building as welcoming as possible and as aesthetically pleasing as possible to current and future members. There was also recognition of a desire to have warm, cozy, and welcoming spaces for smaller groups, board-room-type settings for working meetings, and clear space-use patterns, including signage, for all functions. There is also a desire to have spaces that can be flexible enough to meet the needs of more than one or two groups. The group heard the strong sadness expressed by a few about the need to discontinue our long-term rental agreement with the Prairie Flower Children's Center. With these facts and opinions considered, here is the beginning plan and tentative schedule for getting our spaces put back in order:

December – the Dustin Berger Memorial Library will be moved into what is now the Tower Room. Carpet will be cleaned or replaced; walls will be repainted in a similar neutral color. Movers will be directed by Barb Abbott and Wes Shank as to placement of shelves and furniture. The Library Committee will re-shelf and re-organize the books and materials.

Late January/early February – Artistic Concrete will grind off the residual glue on the concrete floor in the lower level. The concrete will be polished and sealed, providing a natural, waterproof, and easy-care floor.

February through April – Construction of a permanent dividing wall and storage will be built in the current youth room. The resulting two rooms will become classrooms for our younger children (preschool – early elementary) who must be checked into and out of their classrooms by their parents each week. The proximity of the classrooms to the larger lobby provides an open and safe passage for parents and children. During this phase, storage will be built into the room that is now the library. This room will be used for mid- to upper elementary classes. Seating will be flexible or adult-size so this room can be used as a conference room of sorts during the week. The piano from the current Tower Room will be put in this room. Choirs and instrumental groups can use these classrooms for rehearsal space and for instrument and music storage. Also in this phase, the administrative offices and minister's office will be put back in order. Upon completion of construction, classes will be moved from upstairs to downstairs. Middle school will begin meeting in the Beatrix Potter room on the upper level.

May through summer 2011 – The upper spaces will get a simple remodel that will create space for the high school youth group to be in the current Barton and Channing Rooms. The door opening that was created between these spaces and the kitchenette will be closed to make more storage space. What is currently the Emerson Room and the kitchenette will be converted to staff office space and that softer, cozier space for smaller groups, with the specific designs and arrangements still to be determined. Hopefully, by fall 2011, all work will be completed.

It is important to know a few things about the process. While much effort will be given to disrupting the UUFA and renter's activities as little as possible, there will be some planned disruptions. As we work on one area, we will need to temporarily move furniture, files, etc., to another area. This will be especially noticeable as we begin work on the library and most disruptive as we finish the floors in the lower level. The administrative staff will notify people and suggest alternatives when possible to those who will be affected by the work. Also during this time, groups that are displaced will be meeting in most available spaces. It is important that all groups stay in contact with the UUFA office to plan spaces for meetings and events. It may not always be possible to come in and "grab a space" during some of the work phases. Keep watching your weekly e-mail updates to see what is happening and how you can help. And, we cannot say this often enough, thank you for your generous donations that are making this work possible and for your understanding through the coming months.

It is important to know that there is great hope that a lift can be installed to make the library (now Tower Room) and nursery accessible from the Fireside Room. This was left off the last round of renovations to the Fellowship a few years ago to be able to afford the three-stop elevator. The Space Use Task Force will be soliciting people to take on the exploration of this project. It would be wonderful if our recently raised funds could be spread far enough to cover this project. Stay tuned.

## New Member Biographies

Please welcome these new members who joined our Fellowship on November 14, 2010.

**Carol Elbert** – Carol lives at 1528 Meadowlane Ave. in Ames. She is a retired children's librarian. Her hobbies are reading, sewing, and traveling.

**Anna Johnson** – Anna is a student at Iowa State. She enjoys gardening, reading, and dancing.

**Forrest Laws** – Forrest works for Penton Media. He lives at 2627 Kent Ave. His interests are biking, the environment, and carpentry.

**Linda Oppedal** – Linda lives in Ames with her daughter, Olivia. She works at the Fareway corporate office. Her hobbies are knitting, reading, and working out.

**Sarah Orley** – Sarah lives in Ames with her husband, Jon Mathews, and their daughter, Elizabeth (3). Her interests are board games, geocaching, reading, and looking for new friends who enjoy the same.

**Shelli Pitner** – Shelli is a teacher at Boone High School who lives in Ames. She has two grown children, Jami (30), and Joey (20). She enjoys playing music, social and environmental issues, gardening, biking, camping, canoeing, ceramics, and weaving.

**Simone Skowronek** – Simone is temporarily retired. She has a daughter, Nicole, and two granddaughters, Josalynn, and Leah. She lives in Ames where she enjoys reading, acquiring knowledge, and spending time with family and friends.

## Need a Permanent Name Tag?

We take pride as a welcoming religious community to identify ourselves with name tags. It's not easy to remember names when there are so many new faces week to week. The visitors table on Sunday mornings is the place to go to place an order. We have two types: a pin back (\$4.50), and a magnetic version (\$6.00). The order is placed with Cyclone Printing and Engraving when payment is received. These prices cover the cost without any profit for the committee. You do not need to be a member to order a name tag. We want everyone identified who comes on Sundays. Rainbow ribbons to put on your name tag identifying us as a welcoming community are available at the visitor table free of charge.

## KHOI Radio Update and New Year's Eve Gala

At the October congregational meeting the Fellowship voted to transfer the license for KHOI FM, a full power, non-commercial, educational radio station, to the new non-profit KHOI FM station. Although the legal status has changed, the involvement of Fellowship members has not decreased. To see what's happening check [www.khoifm.org](http://www.khoifm.org) for live streaming. For live entertainment you are invited to the Second Old Time Radio Gala on New Year's Eve at the First Baptist Church, 200 Lynn. There will be plenty of space for dancing to the Barn Own Band, lively skits and radio news.

This is the launch of KHOI as an independently operating station with live streaming at [www.khoifm.org](http://www.khoifm.org) where you can order tickets. If you're interested in sharing a table with friends contact KHOI board members, Mary Richards, Jon Hunstock, Kay Puttock, or Susan Franzen.

## Partner Church Committee

After a hiatus of a couple of years, the Partner Church Giving Tree is back with a variety of items toward which you can donate money. The money will be sent to Tordatfalva for the designated purpose. Several items are needed for the parish house such as wood bed frames, cabinetry, cookware, etc. The parish house is being used as a guest house. Besides the parish house, the school can use supplies as well as money to help Lajos with car maintenance and operation and his internet access. These are just a sampling. Look for the Giving Tree in the Fireside Room beginning Sunday, December 5, and find a card that has an item you would like to support. If none of the options strike your fancy, you can still give to a general category of "greatest need" or "seed money for next major project." Thank you for your support of our Partner Church in Tordatfalva.

- Partner Church Committee

## Green Corner



As a subscriber to the Green Sanctuary list serve, I look forward to periodic comments from Jackson Harper and Bob Murphy. Recently Mr. Harper wrote: "Is your neighborhood ready for peak oil?" The International Energy Agency has announced that "peak oil" (the point where demand exceeds production) occurred in 2006.

World crude oil production has been on an undulating plateau for the past five years. As a result oil companies, at great environmental risk, are exploiting oil in hard to get places such as oil sands, the deep ocean and the Arctic. Even so, many experts have forecast that the terminal decline in oil will start in the next 2 to 5 years. According to Robert I. Hirsch, in his new book *The Impending World Energy Mess*, we can likely handle an oil production decline of 2% a year (though it would be very difficult) but 4% a year or higher would be catastrophic.

Transportation could become a big problem for all of us as fuel prices rise and rationing waits in the wings. For those of us who live and work in Ames, we are fortunate to have a reasonably good bus service, but is it adequate for the coming crisis? And what about those who work in Des Moines? There are no buses for them and no commuter rail. Have you experienced the increasing traffic on I-35? Will some residents move closer to their work or buy hybrid or electric cars? Cycling to grocery stores and services 6 to 7 miles distant is possible with electric bikes. Are our bike lanes in Ames adequate? Fuel fees will increase the costs of home services such as trash removal, plumbing, heating and cooling, electrical, home health, mail and parcel delivery, and food delivery.

In response, Bob Murphy says we need to respond to both the global climate change problem AND the peak oil problem. At the same time, there is concern about the large number of immigrants who are arriving in Western Europe and North America. However, people in the United States seldom ask, "Why are so many people leaving their homelands?"

The nuclear power industry is again on the rise, because of energy-related issues in global economics and in the environment. Nuclear power has a lot of promise, but there does seem to be some problems involved (cost, safety and waste disposal).

What happens next? In the present political climate, Mr. Murphy expects "... that we'll move towards a new era of social Darwinism. Energy prices will go up, but the big nations will fight for what they can get. The poor will suffer the most during a time of increased energy prices, but the various power groups - including the factions that dominate 'the environmentalists' - will belittle any requests for fuel assistance. (We saw this happen during last summer's heat wave. There was very little interest in the problems experienced by vulnerable groups.) As winter approaches, the US Senate is talking about reducing support for fuel assistance programs."

Brace yourself for some hard times. Best wishes for the holidays.

Erv Klaas

### Powering the Future

Tuesday, December 7, 7-8:30 pm, at the UUFA

Is it feasible to replace coal with biomass for Ames's energy needs? What other alternatives would work best? Join the Green Sanctuary Committee, the Iowa Farmers Union, and Plains Justice for a panel discussion, followed by sharing of ideas between all those in attendance. Add your ideas, join us on December 7. Light refreshments will be provided. For more info contact Amber Anderson Mba, [amberada@gmail.com](mailto:amberada@gmail.com), 515-708-1813.

### Single Stream Recycling

The UUFA has signed up to be part of Chitty Garbage's Single Stream Recycling program. We have a specially marked recycling containers for plastic containers (no lids), cardboard, paper, tin/aluminum cans, and glass bottles and jars. These items are collected by Chitty and taken to Greenstar of Des Moines for sorting and selling for reuse. *We need your help to make sure food containers are rinsed and clean.* All the recyclable items go in the same container. Guidelines are posted in appropriate places around the Fellowship.

### UUFA Free Exchange

Did you know that Helen Gunderson set up a Yahoo group to UUFA members and friends to exchange items? It is a green way to dispose of useful items and a way to get items you need for free. Check it out at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/uufafreeexchange/>.

# Social Responsibility

## What is the UUSC?

Most “churches” have global “charities” to which they give. In many cases, the nature of this charity subtly asserts a sense of superiority of the givers—i.e., “We know how to fix your problems.” OR, “Here, eat some of our surplus food, or wear our throwaway clothes.”

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC)—the global charity liaison of UU congregations—operates under a partnership model. It identifies locally organized, locally led groups doing effective work on the ground, and channels to them the money and resources they need to sustain or expand their work.

The UUSC is funded by membership and donations. Show your support. Become a member this month! (Individual, \$40; Dual, \$75; Student/Youth, \$10; Senior, \$20)

## Guest at Your Table: November 21 to December 25

This year, our Guest at Your Table collection for UUSC is timed to coincide with the holiday season. What better time to teach your children the importance of giving to strangers—and giving in a way that preserves the recipient’s dignity? Place the donation box on your dining room table, and encourage your child to give regularly.

Stories of Hope, a booklet that uses stories of people around the world to describe what UUSC does, is available for you to take home and read with your children. Boxes will be collected at Christmas-time. Encourage your child to collect enough (\$10) to become a UUSC member! And while you are at it, become a member yourself!

We have set up an online donation on our website. If you would like to donate to UUSC, go to [www.uufames.org](http://www.uufames.org). Scroll to the Guest at Your Table heading and then click on the PayPal donation button. Funds donated through our website will be forwarded to UUSC.

## Yucatan Trip

Social Justice Trip to Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico! The Social Justice Committee has been busy arranging a UUFA service learning trip to the Yucatan for Spring Break, March 2011. If you are interested or want more information, please contact Sue Jarnagin: [jarnagin@iastate.edu](mailto:jarnagin@iastate.edu) or Semakaleng Lebepe-Mazur: [maikanya2000@gmail.com](mailto:maikanya2000@gmail.com). We will work at the agroecology college (U Yit’s Ka’an) in a historic small town, Mani. We will also work with a women’s group in that town and develop a long-term collaborative relationship, in addition to seeing restored Maya ruins, birdwatching, and enjoying the traditional music and foods of the Yucatan, which due to isolation, are different from the rest of Mexico. There will be optional conversational Spanish conversation and Yucatan & Maya culture workshops this winter to help prepare for the trip. We need your input on when would be good times to meet for those sessions.

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## ERP Meals Help Wanted

Despite the usual Sunday morning clipboard and Nuts & Bolts announcements in the Friday email and Sunday bulletin, the Tuesday evening meal slots have been mostly blank since May. David DenHaan and Carolyn Meyers have been filling in all the blanks by providing the Tuesday meals themselves. When an ISU group made themselves available this fall, David and Carolyn took a much needed break. Now that the ISU group is finished with their commitment, it is time for Fellowship members, besides David and Carolyn, to step forward. Please engage in the longstanding tradition of over 20 years of having the Fellowship families and friends providing the Tuesday evening meals. A meal is needed for weekly (Tuesdays) starting December 7. The ERP typically will house and feed between 6-10 single men. Meals ranging from simple hamburger casseroles to slightly more elegant offerings are appreciated and in great demand. If you and your friends are willing to help, please contact David DenHaan at [aquarist72@yahoo.com](mailto:aquarist72@yahoo.com).

<p><b>Help needed - Snow blower operators wanted. Call Rich Van Valin if you can help us out this winter. 296-1821.</b></p>
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## Singing Opportunity for Children and Parents

The UUFA no longer has a children's choir but we have come up with an alternative we hope you will like. Cynthia Marten, director of Fellowship Voices and Ames Schools music teacher, has offered to lead a choir designed for children and parents. The new group will meet a few times a year at 8:45 am for a rehearsal and will then perform at the 9:30 service the same Sunday. If there are enough intested families, there will be another rehearsal at 10:45 for the 11:00 service. This will allow for a children's singing performance without weekly practices. Somewhat reluctant young singers may feel more comfortable having their parents sing with them.

We have called the new choir "Intergenerational Choir" but so far we have mainly adults and only one family group signed up. Adults and teens are welcome but the purpose is primarily to encourage children, ages K - 6, to sing along with their parents. I would like to rename the group, "Children and Parents Singing Together" so everyone knows what the main purpose of the group is. Other name suggestions are welcome.

On December 19 the singing group will meet at 8:45 am, have a brief rehearsal of easy music, and then perform at 9:30 the same day. Check to see if there are enough people signed up for the 10:45 rehearsal on the 19th. If you have questions, please call Ginny Molgaard at 292-1359.

## Christmas Day Potluck

Come join other Fellowship members, friends, and visitors for the camaraderie and great food at a Christmas Day potluck dinner. There will be socializing during the noon hour with dinner served at 1 pm, depending on when the turkey is ready. Then there will be an interlude for mingling between the main and dessert courses. This is a collaborative meal. Diners are asked to bring food to share and help with some aspect of providing rides, setting up, hospitality, and cleaning up. Some of the best conversations happen while doing dishes together. Diners are also encouraged to bring music, readings, and/or games to share. The meal is coordinated by Helen Gunderson of the UU Meals Planning Group and colleagues. This is the fourth year she has headed up the meal. Typically, there have been about 42 diners. If interested in attending, please contact Helen. 232-9416 helen@gunderfriend.com

**SOME OPPORTUNITIES STILL AVAILABLE FROM SUCCESSFUL SILENT AUCTION.** The recently concluded silent auction has added over \$5,000 to the UUFA general fund, and given many members new goods, services, and events to look forward to. The auction owed its existence to Susan Franzen, Mary Richards, and Dorothy Lewis, the last of whom designed and produced all the bid cards, item sheets, and associated materials, and deserves many stars in her crown! Many thanks to the generous volunteers who helped the auction happen: Chris & Tammy Martin, Semakaleng Lebepe, Tom McGiverin and Jo Ann Masterson, Lynn Fawcett, Donna Lutz, Duffie Lorr, Cindy Scholten, Jon & Audrey Hunstock. And if we've forgotten anyone, thank you, too!

AND, there are some open-ended opportunities still available: The Carols by the Fire: The Fellowship Voices-sponsored Christmas songs and carols sing-along (and seasonal goodies and libations) at the Fellowship on Sunday evening, December 12; a chance to give to needy children by sponsoring a knitting project by the Conscientious Crafters; a winter walk led by David Brenner; bicycle tune-ups offered by Rich Van Valin and Nick Lauter; and more. Check out the table in the Fireside Room.

## MoonCookie Cafe

Thanks to everyone who attended and helped with our first Mooncookie Cafe event in October! We raised nearly \$500 and had a lot of fun.

Please mark your calendars for our next two shows, next spring. On Saturday, February 19, (snow date is February 26) we will present 3 talented singer-songwriters (clever title to come) featuring our own Jen Coppoc, Debra Marquart and Elizabeth Zimmerman. It'll be a great evening! Then on Saturday, April 2, we have the pleasure of presenting Gayla Drake Paul from Cedar Rapids. More details to follow....

**Please save the date for baked goods! There will be a bake sale between services on December 13 with a special focus on baked items for the holidays. The proceeds will support the Coming of Age program and Boston-bound youth trip.**

# Committee and Group News

## AMES AREA ALTERNATIVE GIFT MARKET

Alternative Gift Market gifts and cards are available at the Fellowship again this year.

What? At the Alternative Gift Market, when you purchase an “alternative gift,” you receive a description of the item and a card of your choice that you can give or send to your friends and loved ones.

Examples? Alternative gifts available this year include: solar cookers to pasteurize water in Tanzania and Gambia, fruit, hardwood, and “chocolate” trees to promote healthier farming in Central and South America, ojoche seedlings to combat poverty in Haiti, as well as 10 local projects such as support for the Emergency Residence Project in Ames, for Global Builders, the Ames High-Uganda Project, and for Good Neighbor Emergency Assistance.

When? At the Fellowship between and after services December 5, 12, and 19.

If you have questions, contact Bonnie Bowen at 515-292-6923.

## CONSCIENTIOUS CRAFTERS

Our next meeting is at 12:30 pm, in the Tower Room, December 12. The second Sunday of each month is our time to get together to enjoy the fellowship and support of other UU crafters. Please join us with your handwork. If you need advice or encouragement, this is the place to come. If you need ideas for charitable projects, we have them. Beginner or expert, you are welcome. Some of us will be busy working on fulfilling the silent auction orders, where we provide the handmade item and the bidders provided the financial support for the UUFA while getting credit for the donated item. Watch the UUFA website for photos of this project and other information.

We want to thank the college group members who joined us in November. They were enthusiastic and willing beginners. Also a field trip to a local craft store was discussed for early in the new year. More details on that will be forthcoming

the little bUUkshop

REMEMBER - the Little bUUkshop is open every Sunday until the holidays. And you'll find there not only books but jewelry, bumper stickers, a mug or two - and personalized Holiday cards. Be sure to stop by.

One of the new offerings is *Out of the Flames* by Lawrence and Nancy Goldstone. Though it might be described as primarily a biography of Michael Servetus, the first Unitarian martyr, this book is much more than that. It begins with the harrowing procession that takes Servetus to the hill where he is tied to the stake with a copy of his book that rejects the concept of the trinity, *Christianismi Restitutio*, chained to his leg, and then burned to death.

Next the authors switch to an entertaining recounting of the 15th Century communications revolution before tracing the life of Servetus beginning with his birth in Spain as Miguel Serveto. Servetus was a precocious student who was fluent in five languages by his early teens, and because he read the Biblical sources in their original Hebrew and Greek, he knew that nowhere was the trinity mentioned. His staunch refusal to abandon his belief led to his death and to the launching of a movement of freedom of thought and speech that strongly influenced such men as Voltaire and Jefferson.

A fascinating review of medical practice and education in the 1500's provides the backdrop for discussion of Servetus's accomplishments as the physician who for the first time accurately described pulmonary circulation, 75 years before William Harvey did so. Calvin's nearly successful campaign to obliterate any memory of Servetus meant that Servetus never got credit for his discovery.

The last part of the book is a detective story, tracing the three surviving copies of Servetus's most heretical work to their present repositories. The whole book is delightful to read because of the authors' wry comments. All-in-all, a highly recommended read! - *Mary Richards*

## GOSPELS STUDY GROUP NAME CHANGE

For about a year or so, several of us have been gathering as the “Gospels Study Group.” In January, we'll be continuing but will be morphing into what we've decided to call the “Heretics and Spirituality Group.” To give you an idea of what the group will be about, I've listed our “mission statement”:

“We gather, as Unitarian Universalists to study, discuss and consider alternative spiritualities and pop culture with a view toward exploring their contemporary relevance for our lives and culture. We further explore a variety of sources and views in

# Committee and Group News

order to construct our own personal religious beliefs and worldviews.”

If you're interested in adding your voice and grow in your own spirituality, we'll start meeting on Wednesday, January 12, from 7:00 to 8:30 pm. Our first topic to be explored will be "Spirituality and the Undead." Look for more details to come.

- Paul Nelson

## HISTORICAL JESUS NAME CHANGE

After 11 years, the Historical Jesus Book Group has decided to change its name to better reflect our current focus of study. We will now be known as the Religions and Reason Study Group. We will continue to explore the historical roots of our religious beliefs but will also focus on the world's evolving secular and Christian views. Starting in December, the group will be reading *Society Without God* by Phil Zuckerman. Meetings are held 7:00 pm on the third Sunday of the month at the Northcrest Fireside Room. Our next meeting will be December 19. E-mail Marty Helland if you have questions - marhelland@aol.com.

## MINDFULNESS AND MEDITATION

We begin at 6:00 on Sunday evenings and depart when the bell rings at 7:00 pm. We meet in the Fellowship Hall. Sitting meditation is our main mode, with long-time member Faith Winchester leading sessions with gentle authority and grace, and other experienced members as needed, on a rotating basis. Melissa Blacketer collects emails for sparse alerts, such as rare cancellations and change of book titles (mjblacketer@gmail.com). - Submitted by Nancy Grudens-Schuck on behalf of the sangha.

## SKADBERG SCIENCE CIRCLE

The Skadberg Science Circle was started 5-6 years ago, and we have enjoyed meeting at the home of Fritz and Susan Franzen from October through May. We meet from 7-9pm on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month at Fritz and Susan's home at 1216 Scott Ave. in Ames. - Sam (and Fritz)

## WOMEN OF WISDOM - WOW

The annual Women of Wisdom, WOW, Holiday Party will be held on Monday, December 20, at 4:00 - 6:00 pm in the Fireside room. All UU Fellowship women over the speed limit (55) are welcome. Bring treats or wine. Carols will be sung with laughter and joy all around.

## WOMEN'S BOOK GROUP'S READING LIST FOR 2010-2011

Our next Book Group will meet December 6 at 7:00 pm in the Tower Room for a discussion on the book *The Ghost Map* by Steven Johnson. This nonfiction book details the investigations of a physician and a minister into the causes of a terrifying cholera outbreak in London in 1854. The prevailing theory of infection through miasma seemed to be an error to Dr. John Snow who used his prodigious scientific mind to investigate and by Reverend Henry Whitehead using his observations of the social structure of the area around Broad Street to definitively make the connection between infection and water supply.

Please join us for another night of book group fun! This group is an open group and you are free to join us for any or all of our meetings. Any questions: Barbi Greenlaw, 292-5317.

January 3 *Shadow of Sirius* or other poetry by W.S. Merwin

Mar 7 *The Lacuna* by Barbara Kingsolver

May 2 *The Plague of Doves* by Louise Erdrich

February 7 *Piano Teacher* by Janice Lee

April 4 *Still Alice* by Lisa Genova

June 6 TBA

## UUFA CAMPUS GROUP

An energetic group of college students has organized to meet regularly this year. Current and future activities planned are: Water testing of nearby rivers and creeks; Increasing exposure to liberal religious thought on campus and connecting with other religious liberals; Recreational activities like camping, laser tag, bowling; Regional retreats and conferences; Involvement in other social justice work. Join us on Facebook (Unitarian Universalist Campus Group Ames, IA) to stay updated.

## UUYOGA

UU Yoga will meet every Sunday afternoon in December except on December 26. We begin at 4:45. Enjoy 60 minutes of relaxation, stretching, and breathing. The group is about equally divided between men and women. Treat yourself during the holiday season. For more information, contact Karen Bates at 231-9311 or batesandbrown@gmail.com.

## Caring Network

The Caring Network, which connects people in the congregation with each other during times of need, is eager to update its lists of people willing to help in particular ways as needs arise -- things such as cooking a meal, driving someone to a doctor's appointment, welcoming a baby or sending a card. We hear feedback that some people are eager to become engaged but aren't sure how, while others sometimes feel they are being relied on too much.

The Network's philosophy is that everyone in the congregation has the ability to be supportive and everyone in the congregation has times when the journey is made easier through the support of others. If you have never filled out a form letting the Caring Network know what ways you might be able to contribute on occasion -- or even just to note that you'd like to be notified when caring concerns arise -- please do so. A form is included with this newsletter.

If you are already on one or more lists, you will get a check-in e-mail around the first of the year to see whether your information is still as you'd like it.

Beyond those people who occasionally offer support, the Caring Network relies on a set of point people to contact others on the list when needs arise. At the moment, we are searching for a transportation point person to replace Rod Brink, who has served in that role for many years.

For more information about that role -- or to share any caring concerns at any time, please contact one the Caring Network coordinators at [caring@uufames.org](mailto:caring@uufames.org), or contact the Rev. Charlotte Cowtan, Raj Raman, Mary Richards or Brenda Witherspoon directly.

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## Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ames

### 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.*

**Interim Minister:** the Rev. Charlotte Cowtan .....[minister@uufames.org](mailto:minister@uufames.org) – 515-292-5960  
**Director of Youth and Children's Ministries:** Lori Allen .....[dycm@uufames.org](mailto:dycm@uufames.org) – 515-292-5960  
**Music Coordinator:** Paul Ferrone.....[music@uufames.org](mailto:music@uufames.org) – 515-292-5960  
**Office Administrator:** Lisa Harmison..... [uufa@uufames.org](mailto:uufa@uufames.org) – 515-292-5960  
**Projects Coordinator:** Diana Crosswait.....[projects@uufames.org](mailto:projects@uufames.org) – 515-292-5960  
**Nursery Coordinator:** Anne Tepper..... [nursery@uufames.org](mailto:nursery@uufames.org) – 515-292-5960  
**Caring concerns** ..... [caring@uufames.org](mailto:caring@uufames.org) – 515-292-5960

### Officers of the Board

President	Deb Kline
Vice president	Steve Martens
Past president	Mark Witherspoon
Secretary	Jane Johnson
Treasurer	Fritz Keinert

### Board Members

open	through 2011
Bob Haug	through 2011
David DenHaan	through 2012
Carolyn Heising	through 2012
Kay Puttock	through 2012
Iris Brenner	youth representative

**Next Board Meeting:**  
**7 pm, Wednesday, December 8, 2010**

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The UUFA office is open 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday through Friday.