



# Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ames

December 2011

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Service times are 9:15 and 11:00 am except where listed below.

## **4 *Building an Inclusive Culture of Music***

Jim and Jen Coppoc

Music is as natural to humans as breathing. From the first rhythms of our mothers' hearts to the melodies and movement that are so much a part of early childhood on, music is a form of thought, a mode of expression, and a natural and powerful channel for human connection. It's no surprise, then, that nearly all religious traditions keep music at the core of their worship experience. This service focuses on how our congregation can use music to build community, to enhance worship, and to underscore our core values as Unitarian Universalists.

## **11 *The Imperfect Holiday***

Rev. Charlotte Cowtan

Whether we celebrate Christmas, Hanukkah, Solstice, or Kwanza, this is a stressful time of the year for many of us. We worry about finding (and affording) the perfect gifts; we struggle to set aside time from our busy schedules for visiting, travelling, cooking, wrapping, cleaning and entertaining. Perhaps it would be helpful to consider the blessings of imperfection.

## **18 *Stories of the Season***

Lori Allen

All Congregation Service

This is the annual UUFA All Congregation service where our favorite music and stories of the holidays are shared. We'll enjoy Art Konar and his middle school helpers interpreting "Hershel and the Hanukkah Goblins", Lori Allen will her latest holiday story, "The Christmas Dishes", and we'll celebrate the Winter Solstice with a simple ritual as well. All this AND Christmas Carols.

## **25 *A Gift of Presence***

Rev. Charlotte Cowtan and Sam Wormley

Single 10:00 service

This family friendly service shifts our focus from the brightly wrapped Christmas presents (that many will have already unwrapped) to the more lasting gifts of presence that enrich and enliven this season.

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Deadline for the next newsletter is December 15.

For a current calendar, see www.uufames.org

## **Christmas Eve Services**

### **5:00 pm, All Ages Celebration**

Jim Coppoc and the UUFA middle school students are busy creating a Christmas Eve pageant. The pageant, "Shepherdry" will find shepherd contestants answering questions in this Christmas Eve game show, sharing their knowledge of all things holiday. Poems, holiday readings, candle light and lots of Christmas Carols are also a part of this service.

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

Rev. Charlotte Cowtan. A traditional (Unitarian Universalist) Christmas Eve service: a magical service with familiar carols, readings and candlelight.

## The Web

Thanksgiving has passed and we have entered the season of Advent – a time of anticipation, of expectation, of hope. While Advent seldom gets much attention in our Unitarian Universalist tradition, I find the short days and long nights to be a good time to consider the messages this season sends from many of the sources of our living faith.

The winter Solstice offers me the deep knowledge, born of experience, that even when change is so slow as to be virtually imperceptible, it does happen. The seasons do shift. We have only to hold on, to persevere together through the hard times – for they will eventually pass. Meanwhile we must have faith that even the smallest signs can forecast major shifts in reality – and we might help tip the balance for good – by donating gifts, marching for peace, adopting a family, spreading our Universalist message of hope and love in the cold and hurting world.

Hanukkah reminds me that mere survival is not enough. Sometimes we must do more than persevere – for some things, some values, some principles are more important than life itself. Sometimes we must take a stand against oppression, for freedom, for justice, for love. To preserve the essence of our humanity we are sometimes called to live courageously – from our hearts – for a good that is greater than our personal well being.

Christmas calls on me to examine my own prejudices. Whose teaching, whose truths am I predisposed to discard unexamined? While none of us likes to think of ourselves as prejudiced, we all have our closed places. This Advent season is a good time to reflect on the places where we are not open to dialogue, for truth often comes from the most unexpected – and unwelcome – sources.

The Advent season also reminds me that the heroes of the midwinter festivals (the ones chosen to light the solstice fires, Judas Maccabaeas, Jesus of Nazarus) are not, and never have been the true reason for this season's celebrations. The power that fuels this season is larger than any human being; it is no less than the rhythm and power of the Universe. In the midwinter season we humans are reminded that the world turns without our help, but when moved by faith, hope and love we can transform it into a much warmer, brighter, just and compassionate home for everyone.

I wish each of you a power-filled and joy-full holiday season. Happy Holidays!

Faithfully,  
Interim Minister Rev. Charlotte Cowtan

## Solstice Celebration

High Hopes Gardens will be hosting the UUFA Winter Solstice again this year. This event is for all ages, members and friends of the UUFA. We'll have a bonfire with a brief service, candles, and a song or two. We'll follow this with a potluck. Please bring a dish to share, a table service for yourself, and dress warmly. We'll provide beverages and the venue. We'll celebrate on December 21st at 5:30 pm at 2860 Knapp Ave, Melbourne, IA. Maps are available by contacting the office.

## Christmas Day Potluck

There will again be a Christmas Day potluck at the Fellowship for members, friends, and visitors. Since Christmas falls on Sunday, and the one program will be from 10 to 11 am, the meal may begin later than the usual 1 pm start time. But for sure, there will be a social time prior to the meal, and people can linger at the Fellowship after the program and stay for the meal. In the past few years, about 42 people have attended, bringing food to share and helping with set up and/or clean up. It is a cozy affair with a great Christmas spirit. For further information or to RSVP, contact the office or Helen Gunderson. She is coordinating the meal on behalf of the Fellowship Meals Group. [helen@gunderfriend.com](mailto:helen@gunderfriend.com)

**The Fellowship office will be closed December 22 through January 2.**

## What's going on at the Fellowship

The Board and ELT have been discussing Policy Governance (PG) and how it can fit in as we go forward. What decisions does the board truly need to make? Would setting policies by the board, with input from the Fellowship, help the Fellowship run smoother?

Is it time for change? Change is not always better, but if change allows committees to operate within their guidelines, then yes.

Here is an example: The RE Committee would like to expand the religious education umbrella to include children(K-8) and youth (high school).

Bylaws (proposed change)

Section 5. The Religious Education (RE) Committee consists of five or more members, two youth liaisons, and the Director of Youth and Children's Ministries (DYCM) as ex officio. It is the policy-making body for children's and youth religious education, subject to Board review. The RE Committee plans, promotes, and advocates for children's programming and children. The RE Committee will have oversight of the Youth Adult Committee (YAC) which consists of at least three youth, three adults, including a liaison from the RE Committee, and the DYCM as ex officio. The YAC plans, promotes, and advocates for youth programming and youth.

The point I am trying to make is that it is time to review our Bylaws. Should committees be in the Bylaws? If we are interested in PG then the Bylaws need to be revisited. Bob Haug, a Board Member, was asked to review the Bylaws and has given his input. Thank you Bob. What I am asking from the Fellowship is to let the office and me know your individual willingness to assist in this collaboration with input from the Board and ELT.

Thank you and I look forward to your opinions.

Best Regards,  
Steve Martens  
President of the UUFA Board of Directors

## Meta-policy Draft

*This is the proposed draft of how policies will be created and approved. The Board has been discussing the process and welcomes feedback from members. You may email your concerns and suggestions to [board@uufames.org](mailto:board@uufames.org) or talk with a board member in person.*

The Board of Directors is responsible for making policy for the UUFA.

Any policy may be proposed by the board, by staff, by a committee, or by an individual member of the congregation. The proposed policy is brought to the board for discussion at one of the monthly meetings. If the board supports the proposed policy, the proposed policy will be posted via regular communication channels at least one month for the congregation to consider and provide feedback. The board will vote on the proposed policy at the next regular board meeting.

## Who We Are and Where We are Going: Starting the New Year with Direction

2012 will be a big year for the Fellowship. We are going to start the New Year with a bang, so mark your calendars to attend the Sunday, January 1st presentation. Andrew Williams will deliver ONE presentation at 10 am. There will be plenty of social time after the talk. There will be no RE; however, the presentation will be kid-friendly. Come listen to the tranquil tunes of Jen McClung, hear some thought-provoking ideas based on our all-congregation survey results, and consider the year ahead with Andrew. See you on the 1st!

## Congregational Record Submitted



Your Ministerial Search Committee (MSC) is pleased to report that we have completed our Congregational Record and submitted it to the UUA in Boston. Our record is now available for any minister to view through the UUA's settlement system. The record is also available on our website for members to view. You need to be logged in to find it under the Members menu - look for Ministerial Search. There you will also find our Congregational Survey results and Packet (see below) for your light reading pleasure.

The Congregational Record (CR) is a set of specific questions and answers requested by the UUA that all congregations in search submit. The UUA Settlement Handbook says, "Ministers may read CRs for a host of reasons: they may be interested in a particular congregation, they may be considering entering the search process, or they may simply be browsing. Whatever their motive, ministers visiting the CR will be looking both for factual information honestly presented, and for thoughtful interpretation rather than advertisement. They are looking for a congregation with which to do ministry, not for blue sky. The CR is the search committee's best opportunity to attract ministers' interest. It is largely on the basis of the CR that ministers will decide their degree of interest in the congregation."

## Congregational Packet Completed

We have also completed our Congregational Packet. The Congregational Packet (packet) is our prospectus to potential ministers. It is a more expansive view of our congregation, it includes letters of welcome, pictures, and the stories of our congregation. This is what we'll exchange with ministers who we are particularly interested in getting to know better.

When compared with other packets we have reviewed, we think ours is an exceptionally strong document both in terms of content and presentation. We have worked very hard to make our packet a comprehensive, honest, attractive and helpful picture of who we are, who we want to become, and what sort of minister we think can help us get there.

You are invited to view the packet on-line through the UUFA website. You need to be logged in to find it under the Members menu.

## Ministers are Interested

Several ministers have already expressed interest in our congregation, and we are encouraged by what we see. We have every expectation that we will have an excellent group of ministers to consider.

## Thank You

Your MSC extends its deep appreciation to those outside the committee who helped in preparing both these documents by providing data, letters, and pictures. We also want to thank all those members and friends of the UUFA who participated in cottage meetings, community interviews, the survey, and who just approached us one-on-one with their thoughts and concerns. We have tried hard to synthesize all this input honestly and thoughtfully into the picture we have painted.

~ submitted by Mark Harmison on behalf of the Ministerial Search Committee

## Sunday Morning Volunteers

Many of our long-term, dedicated volunteers are also snowbirds. This means we have many openings from December through spring for coffee making, chair set up, greeting, personing the visitors table, bringing treats, and cleaning the kitchen. December (<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/december357>) and January (<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040C49AEA9283-january1>) sign up genius links are available or contact Diana in the office to help.



At this very busy time, I will share with you a few quotes that symbolize how I think of all things born, re-born, and celebrated. May your holidays be all that you need to find new life and energy in what you hold most dear. Happy Holidays from me and . . . .

*“Recognize that the very molecules that make up your body, the atoms that construct the molecules, are traceable to the crucibles that were once the centers of high mass stars that exploded their chemically rich guts into the galaxy, enriching pristine gas clouds with the chemistry of life. So that we are all connected to each other biologically, to the earth chemically and to the rest of the universe atomically. That’s kinda cool! That makes me smile and I actually feel quite large at the end of that. It’s not that we are better than the universe, we are part of the universe. We are in the universe and the universe is in us.”* - Neil deGrasse Tyson

“Meister Eckhart once said: ‘What good is it that Christ was born 2,000 years ago if he is not born now in your heart?’

“Lord, we do far too much celebrating your actual coming in our hearts. I believe in God, but do I believe in God-in-me? I believe in God in heaven, but do I believe in God-on-earth? I believe in God out there, but do I believe in God-with-us?

“Lord, be born in my heart. Come alive in me this Christmas! Amen.”

### *The Journey* - Mary Oliver

One day you finally knew  
what you had to do, and began,  
though the voices around you  
kept shouting  
their bad advice--  
though the whole house  
began to tremble  
and you felt the old tug  
at your ankles.  
“Mend my life!”  
each voice cried.  
But you didn’t stop.

You knew what you had to do,  
though the wind pried  
with its stiff fingers  
at the very foundations,  
though their melancholy  
was terrible.  
It was already late  
enough, and a wild night,  
and the road full of fallen  
branches and stones.  
But little by little,  
as you left their voices behind,

the stars began to burn  
through the sheets of clouds,  
and there was a new voice  
which you slowly  
recognized as your own,  
that kept you company  
as you strode deeper and deeper  
into the world,  
determined to do  
the only thing you could do--  
determined to save  
the only life you could save.

- Lori Allen  
Director of Youth and Children’s Ministry

## Religious Education Holiday Schedule

This year Christmas and New Year fall on Sundays. On these dates there will be NO religious education classes or nursery care so that our staff and volunteers may celebrate the holidays. There is a change in the service times as well, there will only be one service on those days at 10:00 am. Watch the weekly RE Update and All Fellowship emails for reminders about these services.

## Gather the Spirit - December 7, 2011

5:30 Dinner – Chef’s needed! (Contact Lori Allen)

6:30 Gather the Spirit – Chalice Lighting, Story, Meditation

6:45 Aaron Mann shares information about his Coming of Age project, the showing of the movie “Tapped” and other associated projects.

7:15 Discussion or work on our river collage

7:30 Adjourn

## Small Group Ministry (SGM)

New Small Group Ministry Sessions will be forming in December and starting the first week of January, 2012. This session, the group meeting times will be set for the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month from 7:00 – 8:30 pm, and the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month from 7:00 – 8:30 pm. Groups will be limited to 10 people per session, including two co-facilitators. More than one group may be meeting each evening. Please stop by the Small Group Sign Up Table in the Fireside Room on December 4, 11, and 18 or contact the UUFA office.

## Get Ready to Ride the Bus!

We're asking that people who are planning to ride the bus to GA reserve your space with a \$50 deposit. You'll see that when you make your deposit, you can choose which seat you'll be sitting in when we travel to Phoenix. We'll depart Ames on June 19 and return on June 25th. General Assembly will be geared for intergenerational participants, including children as young as age 8. For more information, check the UUA websites: <http://www.uua.org/ga/2012/index.shtml>; <http://www.uua.org/immigration/moral/152647.shtml> OR contact Lori Allen (dycm@uufames.org) or Charlotte Cowtan (minister@uufames.org).

## Transitions

In early November, Ruth Appleton, our UUFA Youth Coordinator, resigned her part-time position with the Fellowship. We wish Ruth well and thank her for working with our teens both as a volunteer and as paid staff.

As we move forward, youth and adults will be forming a task force to hire a Youth Coordinator. The goal is to have a Youth Coordinator hired and working by late January/early February.

## 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, supplies to provide safe drinking water for communities in the Philippines, or provide a bicycle ambulance for a village in Africa, as well as nine 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 4, 11, and 18.

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

## What's that you say?

You wanted to join the Fellowship Voices Christmas Carol party but didn't get to sign up at the auction? You're in luck! We're happy to include you at seven o'clock Sunday evening, December 11, in the Fireside Room (so we can all enjoy the fireplace.) You bring \$5 for a person or \$10 for a family, which will go to the Fellowship auction fund, and we provide holiday goodies, coffee and cocoa, story-telling, and a really great sing-along. See you there!

## ERP is starting up again on December 20

The Emergency Residence Project is looking for cooks to provide meals for 6-10 men on Tuesday evenings at 5:30 pm at the Emergency Residence Project Shelter, 225 South Kellogg here in Ames. If you're interested and for more information contact David DenHaan or Carolyn Myers 515-451-1794. Supplies are available to volunteers. This has been added to our Sunday morning volunteers Sign Up Genius links too.

## Epiphany Gathering: Friday, January 6, 6 pm

Epiphany: “to make manifest,” “to reveal,” “an illuminating realization,” or just “a good reason to gather together”

The start of a New Year is a fine time for reflection and planning. This year, January 6th, Epiphany, or Twelfth Night (the 12th day after Christmas), falls on Friday night. The UUFA Transition Team invites you to join us that evening for fellowship (food & fun) and for community conversations about a congregational covenant.

The congregational covenanting process will give members the opportunity to share what they need from this community to feel safe and supported as they participate in the life of the Fellowship. The result of our conversations will be a living document that allows us to make a clear commitment to how we will live our principles as we gather together to work toward our UUFA vision to become a “beacon of social justice and liberal religion.” As Jackie Cornish notes in her contribution to the *Tapestry of Faith* curriculum, “The free church tradition of which we are a part does not offer up a creed, a certain set of beliefs, that everyone must accept in order to belong to the community. Instead, the boundaries of our community are determined by commitment and participation. Our central question is not ‘What do we believe?’ but rather ‘What values will we uphold and how will we do this together?’”

What does a covenant look like? Well, in his 2002 book *The American Creed*, Forrest Church offered the following paraphrase of the 1648 covenant of the New England Puritans: “We pledge to walk together in the ways of truth and affection, as best we know them now, or may learn them in the days to come, that we and our children may be fulfilled and that we may speak to the world in words and actions of peace and goodwill.”

We’ll have examples of several covenants from UU congregations available on January 6th. If you want to explore some on your own you might take a look at the statements from the following UU communities:

- [Unitarian Universalists of Arlington, VA](http://www.uucava.org/page/uuca-congregational-covenant) (http://www.uucava.org/page/uuca-congregational-covenant )
- [Edmonds Unitarian Universalist Church](http://www.euuc.org/members/covenant.php) (http://www.euuc.org/members/covenant.php )
- [Emerson Unitarian Universalist Congregation](http://www.emersonuu.org/downloads/congregational-covenant.pdf) (http://www.emersonuu.org/downloads/congregational-covenant.pdf)

Given our great response to the search committee’s cottage meetings, the transition team looks forward to offering another opportunity to gather for Fellowship and conversations about things that matter. After our Epiphany gathering and workshop, we’ll follow-up with some small group discussion opportunities. After we have a draft document, transition team members will hold hearings this spring in hopes of bringing a congregational covenant to the annual meeting in May. If you have questions or input to offer before January 6th please be touch with the current Transition Team chair, Amy Slagell ([aslagell@gmail.com](mailto:aslagell@gmail.com)). Please come celebrate our healthy congregation January 6th, 2012!

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### the little bUUkshop

Be sure to visit the UUFA Little bUUkshop during the holiday season. You’ll find gift ideas there for others, and things you’ll want for yourself: Check out the jewelry: sterling chalice art both on hand and to order (it’s cheaper if you buy it through the bUUkshop); enameled rainbow chalice pendants, and more.

Browse the books: we have multiple copies of some favorites, such as *Out of the Flames*, a portrait both of Michael Servetus and of the times in which he lived.

## New Members to Welcome

**Melanie Brooks:** I am an Assistant Professor at ISU in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies. My family and I just moved to Ames in August from Columbia, Missouri, and we are happy to be here. You might see my brood running around: Holland (11), Bronwyn (9), Clodagh (7), and Jürgen (19 months). My husband Jeff will pop in now and again. I enjoy traveling, reading, gardening, and listening to good UU discussions! I look forward to meeting you all in the future.

**Elliot N. DeVore:** I was born and raised in Knoxville, TN, where I did my Bachelors in Psychology at the University of Tennessee. In August I moved to Ames to start my masters program in the Social Justice Track of the Educational Leadership and Policy Studies program at Iowa State University. My journey with the UU church began back home in Knoxville, TN and I'm excited to continue it here at the UUFA. Thanks for making Ames feel like home!

**Jonah Powell:** I have four grown children, each with two children. Presently I live with my oldest child and family in Ames and bring my grandchildren to Religious Education classes on Sunday. I like to hike, crochet/knit, and cook (vegetarian). I was a counselor for recovering alcoholic/drug addicted women before retiring. I grew up in Montana and lived in several states. I taught in an elementary school in Guam.

Please also welcome **Jill Mortenson** and **Alisha Sauer**. Their biographies were not available by press time. All joined the Fellowship on Sunday, November 13, 2011.

## Conscientious Crafters

Our group meets the 2nd Sunday of the month after second service, 12:15 - 2:00 pm in Classroom 3. In December we will have several of our members showing us crafts to make for the holidays. The monthly reminder will include supplies you may want to bring to make the demonstrated crafts. You are invited to bring your own craft project to work on and join us on December 11 for fun and fellowship. We have experts and novices, so whatever your level of expertise and whatever craft you enjoy, you are welcome. Bring a sack lunch if you want. We look forward to a relaxing and creative afternoon together. Contact Sue Ann Peck or Mary Richards if you have questions.

## Change: Fellowship Game Night will be Saturday, December 10

Our December Fellowship Game Night will take place on Saturday, December 10 (rather than our usual second Friday date) at 6:00. This is an event for all ages!

What to bring:

- a game, puzzle, etc. to share (we will have some on hand, too)
- a potluck dish to share – If you'd rather Nancy pick up pizza for you – \$1.00 per slice – please let her know by phone (231-5752) by Friday at 4:00 pm or by email by 9:00 pm Thursday, December 8 ([nancytepper@yahoo.com](mailto:nancytepper@yahoo.com)). Please include whether you'd like veggie and/or meat – I'll try to accommodate other requests as well. We will have water, juice, soft drinks, and coffee on hand.

We can always use help setting up (5:30) and cleaning up (????).

Please RSVP if you can to let us know how many to plan for; otherwise, just come. Also, if you'd like to get direct reminders in the future, or just before the event, please let Nancy ([nancytepper@yahoo.com](mailto:nancytepper@yahoo.com)) know (and include your email and phone number). If you would be willing to help coordinate the event with Nancy for a while beginning in December, please let me know!

Hope to see you there!

- Sarah and Nancy

## Heretics & Spirituality News

The Heretics & Spirituality group continues to meet every Wednesday at 7:00, and December brings a new book selection. Please join us for reading and discussion of *Small Gods* by Terry Pratchett. This fiction novel “tells the origin of the god Om, and his relations with his prophet, the reformer Brutha. In the process, it satirizes religious institutions, people, and practices, and the role of religion in political life.” Grab a copy and join us for engaging conversation all month long. For more information about the group, contact any current member: Mark Harmison, Marty Helland, Paul Nelson, Toby Ewing, Faith Winchester.

## Mindfulness & Meditation

Have you read *The Power of Now* by Eckhard Tolle? It is the current reading for contemplation and discussion in the Mindfulness & Meditation group. We'll continue reading a chapter a week from this powerful and transformative text, meeting each Sunday evening from 6:00-7:00 for discussion and silent meditation. If you're interested in beginning (or growing) your meditation practice and cultivating new ways of being, please join us. Cushions and chairs provided, BYO-Book. For December, please note that the group will NOT meet on the evenings of December 25 or January 1. Contact Faith Winchester for more information.

## UU Women's Book Group

Please join us at the UUFA Monday, December 5, at 7:00 pm for a discussion of Anne Garrels' gripping account of her tenure as a reporter for NPR in Iraq as war begins. *Naked in Baghdad* gives us a insider's look at the way the US conducts war and the effects it has on the people she meets and interviews. Please join us for this discussion and any or all of the other discussions on this year's list.

For your calendar, this year's reading list:

January 2 Selected Poems --*Strike Sparks* by Sharon Olds;  
 February 6 *Emperor of all Maladies* by Siddhartha Mukerjee;  
 March 5 *The Sweet By & By* by Todd Johnson;  
 April 2 *Freedom a Novel* by Jonathan Franzen;  
 May 7 *Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot;  
 June 4 *In the Garden of Beasts* by Erik Larson

Join us for any or all of the discussions! We look forward to another year of fun and conversation. Give me a call if you have any questions, 292-5317. My email is [bluemoon\\_1660@yahoo.com](mailto:bluemoon_1660@yahoo.com) ~ Barbi Greenlaw



Jen and Jim provided musical entertainment for the November 12 auction. While the money is still being counted from the extended auction offerings, the fundraiser brought in over \$8000.

## “Give Smart” UUFA Endowment Tea a Success (fun too)

On a sunny fall Sunday afternoon twenty-one UUFA members gathered for tea and an active discussion on giving to others. Our discussion leader, Jeremy Galvin from the ISU Foundation, was amazed at the far-reaching generosity represented by the long list of our giving recipients.

Jeremy encouraged us to

- develop family goals for charitable giving,
- set priorities,
- support each other, and
- stick to your family plan.

The take home message – “be a conscious donor and make a difference in the lives of others through giving”.

For information on the UUFA Endowment please contact Ginny Huntington, Rosa Unal, Duffie Lorr, Suzanne Zilber or James Pritchard.

## Social Class Issues Awareness Update

Seventeen Fellowship folk and one minister attended the first social class workshop on October 13th and explored definitions of social class and examined their personal experiences. Eight of those attended the second session on November 17th and explored different types of classism and stages that people go through in developing an understanding about class issues. We began but did not finish a conversation about how to make the UUFA a welcoming place for people of all social classes. One idea generated, was that what people do for work can have a lot of class baggage attached to it. So when we are welcoming newcomers, let's not ask what they do for a living, but instead ask what brought them to the Fellowship and what are they “into”. In addition, if we invite a newcomer to join us somewhere for coffee or a meal, let's be sensitive to budget issues regarding where we go. Or perhaps you can offer to treat them until we can come up with a newcomer “treats out budget”! I hope to offer another session just focused on being a social class inclusive congregation in the future, but it will have to wait until after the Pledge Drive now. ~ Respectfully, Suzanne Zilber

## December is UUSC month!

by Greta Anderson

When I joined UUFA, I wanted to know, “what is the foreign missions arm of UUs?” Regardless of our touchiness to the word “missions”, the fact is that we in the global north and west are vastly more possessed of resources than those in the global south. Any religion worth its salt wants to address this injustice.

The answer is the UUSC, the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee. Here is how the UUSC compares to “mission arms” of other denominations (think Church World Service):

- In times of crisis (earthquakes, floods), provides funds and other resources to selected local groups working to organize people in response to crisis, rather than dumping surplus U.S. grain.
- Partners with grassroots organizations rather than religious congregations.
- More focused on human rights and human development than on people's “neediness”.
- Pays strict attention to its partners' inclusiveness. No non-inclusive organizations need apply.

### December is UUSC month at our Fellowship--a two pronged approach:

**Guest at Your Table:** Children use boxes to collect money (coins, etc) at mealtime and hear stories of the invisible “guests”, those equals we honor with our gifts. (Parents, pick up *Stories of Hope* or download [http://www.uusc.org/files/2010-2011\\_Stories-of-Hope-Booklet.pdf](http://www.uusc.org/files/2010-2011_Stories-of-Hope-Booklet.pdf).) Part of GAYT is a membership drive: adults are encouraged to join UUSC. \$40 for adults, \$75 for a couple, \$25 for seniors. But by no means limit yourselves to these levels of giving. Please visit UUSC website for more information. <http://www.uusc.org/archive/info/vsmember.html>

**Sunday collections for NW Arkansas Workers' Justice Center.** UUSC has pledged to fund this grassroots partner. The project is to create educational materials to help workers address health and safety violations in poultry processing plants and construction sites. This education will empower workers to speak up against the hazardous

conditions they encounter. For the month of December, all offerings not otherwise designated will go to this important work of UUSC. Our goal is to reach the full \$2688 required to fund the project; expect weekly updates on our progress! More <http://www.uusc.org/workersrights>

## AMOS, A Mid-Iowa Organizing Strategy

The UUFA donates 1% of our budget to AMOS. AMOS has been an effective way to impact Social Justice in Central Iowa. Here's who is doing what:

**Healthcare,** The UUFA is unrepresented--would you like to volunteer?

- Greatly improved financial assistance program at Mary Greeley Medical Center (2007)
- Urgent Care medical services at McFarland Clinic (evenings, weekends, holidays) (2008)
- Prenatal care for uninsured women in Ames & Story County. Beginning in December 2010, a mobile clinic from Broadlawns Hospital in Des Moines sees prenatal patients, both uninsured and Medicaid-eligible, twice monthly at Bethesda Lutheran Church in Ames.

**The environment**--Rich Van Valen

- Held seven public lectures and three half-day workshops on all aspects of sustainability (2009-2011). These were organized by AMOS and jointly sponsored by the City of Ames and Ames Public Library. Over 1,000 person-hours of participation.
- Published "Ames, Be Cool Action Guide" (2008), funded by the City of Ames. Several printings to date of this practical guide to help individuals and families reduce their carbon footprint.
- Successfully advocated that the City of Ames begin community sustainability planning. City Council established the Ames Sustainability Task Force (2010) to work on conservation of electricity. Based on contributions by AMOS leaders, AST has a proposal before the Council (9/2011) to expand this effort to comprehensive sustainability planning.

**Youth and Education**--Cheryl Lawson

- In April 2011 the Y&E Team held a public "sharing session" in which they shared information they had gathered in 20 meetings with educators and service providers who work with at risk students in the public schools. Further input was gathered small group discussions at this meeting, which included attendance by the mayor, city manager, president of the Ames school board, superintendent of the Ames Community School District, the police chief, and the director of Cy Ride.

Based on this research, Y&E pursuing two issues:

- We have been a collaborative partner on the Story County Resource Guide [www.storycountyresourceguide.org](http://www.storycountyresourceguide.org), including assisting with content/connections for the youth page of the site through launch (earlier this month) and at least 6 months into the live date.
- We are currently trying to get fare free bus transportation for all middle and high school students. Our intent was to secure free transportation for at risk students but Cy Ride indicated that it would be an administrative nightmare to determine who qualified for at risk status and bus passes for that group of students would single them out. It would be easier for Cy Ride to let middle and high school students all ride fare free. They would need to have a valid school id.

Background: 2009 house meetings of hundreds of Ames citizens revealed a significant concern for the students who are at-risk in our community. Our team's meetings with 20 professionals who work with students at risk (law enforcement, education, social services) revealed transportation is a major and fundamental issue for youth at-risk and their families in Ames – significantly limiting youth's full participation in school, in enrichment activities, in access to support services and in employment.

Update: We have met with Cy Ride administrators and each member of their board to get support. They all support this initiative but funding is the issue. Cy Ride has three funding entities - City of Ames, Government of the Student Body and the University. We are currently meeting with each member of the Ames city council to gain support for funding.

**Mental Health**--Rilla Fox

- Held two well attended “Community Conversations” (9/2010 & 4/2011) to educate the community about issues confronting persons with mental illnesses in Story County.
- Successfully lobbied, in collaboration with the Mental Health Team of the Des Moines Cluster of AMOS and other organizations, for a complete redesign of the of the community mental health care system in Iowa (2011).
- An AMOS leader from the AMOS-Ames Mental Health Team has been appointed by Gov. Branstad to one of the mental health redesign teams created by the legislature (2011).

**Building Community**--Kay Puttock, Mary Richards and Terry Lowman

- We are working on bringing “Undoing Racism”, an excellent workshop by the People’s Institute from New Orleans, to Central Iowa. We’re looking for money--the workshop is \$15,000 for about 40 students--and students--we want “gatekeepers” or people who control access to jobs, education, healthcare, money.
- Mary Richards has contacted the Story County Sheriff, Ames Police Chief and ISU Security Chief. Terry Lowman has contacted the YWCA, Ames, Mayor, YSS, the Library and both Mary & Terry were well received. We have set October 2012 to begin workshops.

**Economic Justice/Project Iowa**--The UUFA is unrepresented--would you like to volunteer?

- Helped abolish car-title lending (lobbying effort with several other organizations) (2007). AMOS-EJ also contributed to successful lobbying efforts for an increase in the minimum wage as well as an expanded Earned Income Tax Credit, which is considered an important complement to the increase in minimum wage.
- Project IOWA (Iowa Opportunities for Workforce Development) – a workforce intermediary program to train underemployed (and unemployed) Iowans for living wage jobs. To date there are 71 applicants (7 from Ames/Story County), multiple job commitments from mid-Iowa employers, and \$167,500 in private funds committed. Project Iowa hopes to start its first group of trainees in January 2012.

**Immigration**--although AMOS isn’t active in Ames, there is a strong contingent in Des Moines. Carol Barrick, Lee Molgaard and Sue Jarnigan have been strong advocate of immigrants.

**House meetings are coming!** The meetings will be held during Lent--February 22 through April 7. We encourage all UUFA members to attend these meetings to discuss Social Justice (and injustice) issues for AMOS to work on. We’ll be looking for hosts and attendees.

**Social Justice Events:**

Chalica, our own UU Holiday tradition. More <http://www.uuworld.org/news/articles/153582.shtml>

Standing on the Side of Love: Join us for 30 days of Love Webinar Wednesday, December 7 at 7:30 will be upstairs at UUFA. One of the presenting congregations will be Rochester, MN UU--with Carol Hepokoski

Welcoming Congregation/Interweave: Wednesday, December 7th after the above Webinar, LGBT community and allies will meet for a short organizational meeting.

UUFA is hosting MICA’s “Living with HIV” auction on Thursday February 9. UUFA needs a volunteer to help coordinate with MICA to host the auction.

**UUFA Social Justice needs help:**

Penpals for UUs in prison. <http://clf.uua.org/penpals.html> Write a letter or two a month!

UUFA board representative for Good Neighbor-- a noon meeting the second Tuesday of the month.

UUFA representatives for AMOS in Healthcare and Economic Justice/Project Iowa (see above).

Social justice movie buff? Represent UUFA for the Ames Public Library’s Reel Connections--help pick out movies and arrange for feedback experts for after movie discussions.

See Terry Lowman or email [terryLLowman@aol.com](mailto:terryLLowman@aol.com) for more information.

## SAVE THE DATE!!!

*Fellowship Forward* Family Fun(d) Night is Saturday, February 4, 7-9 pm

Join our Fellowship family to celebrate what is great about us! We will have food, balloons, party favors, door prizes and live musical entertainment based on Sesame Street music. Ages 5 and up will be in the Fellowship Hall while those under 5 will be offered childcare. Children of various ages may also view the video "Follow that Bird" if they don't want to hang with the grown ups. Sign ups will occur in January.

Sponsored by the Stewardship Committee.

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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 – 515-292-5960  
**Director of Youth and Children's Ministries:** Lori Allen .....dycm@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  
**Music Coordinators:** Jen & Jim Coppoc .....music@uufames.org – 515-292-5960  
**Caring Concerns** ..... caring@uufames.org – 515-292-5960  
**Campus Group** .....campus@uufames.org – 515-292-5960  
**Youth Advisor** ..... youth@uufames.org – 515-292-5960  
**Board of Directors** ..... board@uufames.org

### Officers of the Board

President	Steve Martens
Vice president	Lisa Larson
Past president	Deb Kline
Secretary	Jo Ann Masterson
Treasurer	Fritz Keinert

### Board Members

David DenHaan	through 2012
Kay Puttock	through 2012
Amy Slagell	through 2012
Bob Haug	through 2013
Raj Raman	through 2013
Iris Brenner	youth representative

**Next Regular Board Meeting:  
7:00 pm, Wednesday, December 14**

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The UUFA office is open Sundays 8:45-12:30, Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays 9:00-5:00, Wednesdays 1:00-7:00.