



# Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ames

January 2014

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Office hours:  
Monday - Thursday,  
1:00 - 4:30 pm



Rev. McKusick's  
Column

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## Sunday Service times 9:15 and 11:00 am.

### January Service Theme: Reinvigorate

#### **5 *The Transient and the Permanent***

Rev. Kent McKusick

Theodore Parker publicly disputed the miracles of the New Testament and the authority of the Bible in an 1841 sermon titled *A Discourse on the Transient and Permanent in Christianity*. He was branded as a Unitarian heretic prophet. How might his 173 year old controversial message reinvigorate Unitarian Universalism today?

#### **12 *Reinvigorate with Movement***

Jan Vine, shepherding

Service description not available at time of printing.

#### **19 *30 Days of Love***

Rev. Kent McKusick

As the third year of this UUA program begins (running from January 18 to February 16), hear reflections on the six proposed Congregational Study Action Issues (CSAI) for 2014 to 2018 that address issues of class; age and ability; the war on terror; gun violence; renewing democracy; and the pursuit of peace for Israelis and Palestinians. Learn why these are spiritual and ethical issues and participate in choosing which CSAI's will be presented at this year's General Assembly. <http://www.uua.org/statements/current/>.

#### **26 *Sacred Ground***

Rev. Kent McKusick

Eboo Patel sees America's religious diversity as a tapestry of beauty and potential. How might we better respond to the divisive rhetoric and prejudice since 9/11? How can faith and interfaith understanding be a bridge of cooperation and coming together at UUFA, in Unitarian Universalism and for our country?

### Two important meetings on Sunday, January 12

First, in an effort to have open dialogue and communication, a Cottage Meeting will be held 1:00-2:00 pm. Members of the board will be available to listen and visit directly with fellowship members and friends. If you *like* things the fellowship is doing, let us know. If you have *concerns* about things happening in the fellowship, please let us know. If you think there are *opportunities* we are missing, let us know. This is a great opportunity to have your voice heard as we move into budgeting season for the upcoming year.

Second, following the Cottage Meeting we are having a Committee Chair Roundtable to visit with and among the committee chairs (2:00-4:00 pm). As a part of this we will be asking for input on our strategic plan. Each committee chair should have received a list of four planning questions from your board liaison. If not, please contact the main office for the questions. The strategic planning process will help us determine what we, as a fellowship, would like to accomplish over the next year and three years. It will help us set budget priorities as well. As the plan evolves, there will be future opportunities for review, but this will be our starting point, so please make your views heard if you have input!

Childcare will be provided for both of these important meetings. Please contact the office if you need childcare so we may plan accordingly. ~ Joel Geske, board president

Deadline for the next newsletter is January 20. For a current calendar, see [www.uufames.org](http://www.uufames.org)

## A new year begins!

As James and I pack up our apartment and prepare to move across town to a home we have purchased, I am aware of the many boxes that have remained unpacked for sixteen months! Moving is like an archeological dig. It is also a time of filtering through life and deciding what is useful to keep, repurpose, or throw out! For this newsletter, I am revisiting and rewriting a portion of the first sermon I gave as your called minister: Packing, unpacking and (un)unpacking. For all of us, it is a good time of the year to consider endings, beginnings, where we are, and where we might like to be.

The process of packing and unpacking offers insights into our influences and spiritual journeys as questioners and seekers. This spiritual home holds a broad and diverse spectrum of beliefs for people of many faiths and people of no faith. Imagine our fellowship hall filled with incredibly huge stacks of boxes filled with all of our individual beliefs, past and present. As Unitarian Universalists, we are always evolving, growing, and moving.

When we sit in our sacred space, we experience the collective power of all times past and all times to come. We have the opportunity to influence each other and open ourselves to be influenced by sharing and hearing different and overlapping understandings of the great mysteries of life. We stretch our capacities in packing and unpacking the spiritual boxes that we discover or have carried for years. We may find ourselves in a process and ritual of discarding the theological parts of our lives that no longer have relevance for us or have been exposed to be sources of oppression, discrimination, pain, or violence. Perhaps, we are exploring, questioning or rediscovering a belief system that we inherited from family or beloved friends. Perhaps the box has been packed away for years, taking up space in our lives or unconsciously weighing down our very being. Perhaps we believe that we threw out a particular theological box years ago, yet whenever someone mentions it or reminds us of the contents, we experience a strong reaction or relive a painful time in our lives. This is where (un)unpacking comes into play. Perhaps it is time to (un)unpack, explore, and process these “boxes” in this caring and supportive community of resilient wanderers. Repeating the words of Richard Gilbert: “Breathe deeply. Clear the mind of all cluttered thought. Purge the spirit of all unkindness. Rinse the soul clean and pure. Here you are at home.”

The Reverend Mister Rogers would add to this, “Transitions are almost always signs of growth, but they can bring feelings of loss. To get somewhere new, we may need to leave somewhere else behind.” Another new year together marks a transition in the life of the fellowship. We are all in a constant process of leaving and arriving... of going toward something. We are all packing, unpacking, and (un)unpacking.

Happy New Year!

In the ministry we share,  
Rev. Kent McKusick

## Guylas! Paprika! Goulash!

What's a better activity to warm our hearts and insides in February than sharing a bowl of Transylvanian Goulash (stew) on February 16 at the 1st Partner Church Goulash Cook-off!!! In collaboration with the UUFA Meals Group we will be honoring our friends in Tordafalva, Romania, and our partnership by celebrating delicious ethnic recipes with a healthy dose of UUFA comraderie! Donations will go toward supporting the needs of our partner church.

Please contact Kitty Fisher (UUFA Partner Church Committee) or Sue Ann Peck (UUFA Meals Group) with questions/suggestions and to volunteer to help. We will have a table in the Fireside Room in January to entice you with sample recipes and sign-up sheets to indicate how you would like to participate. We are also looking for daring souls to judge the goulash entries! Special prizes will be awarded to the winners!

Start doing your recipe research and enter a special goulash recipe (meat, vegan, gluten-free) or bring other dishes that feature paprika. Join us for this saucy, spicy event and discover that Transylvanian goulash is not what Iowans grew up calling goulash!

~ Kitty Fisher

## Fellowship

Some people have expressed concern that we are “losing” the fellowship model as we grow as a congregation. As I looked around me at services last Sunday, I realized that as we grow there are more opportunities to serve in the fellowship than ever before.

There were beautiful flowers on the table, someone had taken time to decorate the table and make it welcoming. There was wonderful artwork on the walls and the art committee had once again found a wonderful local artist. Due to the snow, there wasn't an assigned person there to make coffee....but people pitched in and coffee was available as were wonderful treats. As the basket was passed, a portion of the money went to good causes suggested by the social justice committee. Chairs were set up, song books were out, child care was available, religious education takes place, we shared our joys and sorrows and I know people with needs will be visited. We had a wonderful service with a caring minister (personnel committee, committee on ministry, program committee) with inspiring music. The dishwasher was out of order and people pitched in to wash the dishes.

And this was just the fellowship parts that come together to create the Sunday Service. Behind the scenes there was the building committee, the grounds committee, finance committee, stewardship committee and dozens of others that ALL make the fellowship run.

Rather than LESS opportunity for the fellowship model, it strikes me that as we grow there are ever more opportunities to serve and help the fellowship. Have you found your niche....how do YOU choose to become an integral part of this wonderful fellowship we share? If you haven't found a way to give back to the fellowship, the new year might be a good time to explore the opportunities available.

- Joel Geske, UUFA board president

### Visit our new Webpage!

The Stewardship Committee is pleased to announce our new page on the UUFA website. Our page will enable members and friends to connect with and deepen our ties to the Fellowship through gifts of our Time, Talent, and Treasure. Our content is designed to inform and assist with all aspects of stewardship. Pledge materials for the upcoming annual drive will be added soon. Please take a look!

- The Stewardship Committee

## The Caring Corner

### Meals Team Sub-Committee

This month the Meals Team reports: it's good to think of warm casseroles in the cold of winter! Our purpose is to provide meals to UUFA members who have a temporary need; say, after surgery, during incapacitating illness, at the loss of a family member, etc.

Right now there are 17 folks who have indicated a willingness to provide meals on occasion—but we'd always like to have more, to spread out the sharing. Folks go out of town, or are just too busy—or sometimes they need meals themselves! Since August we've provided 16 meals to Fellowship members—so you see, the burden is not too great on any volunteer! (Contact Mary Richards--maryrich@isunet.net, or 708-3034) if you want to join our crew.)

The Caring Group would like to announce an acquisition: an anonymous donor made it possible for us to purchase 12 dozen 7” dessert plates so we won't have to rent them for receptions any longer. They live in the Caring Cupboard (beside the refrigerators) and are there for the whole Fellowship to use.

- Mary Richards for the Caring Committee.



### UUFA Caring Network

caring@uufames.org  
515.292.5960 (main office)

The Rev. Kent McKusick  
minister@uufames.org  
515.292.8929

*Sharing Our Caring*



## Respite

“Every person needs to take one day away. A day in which one consciously separates the past from the future. Jobs, family, employers, and friends can exist one day without any one of us, and if our egos permit us to confess, they could exist eternally in our absence. Each person deserves a day away in which no problems are confronted, no solutions searched for. Each of us needs to withdraw from the cares which will not withdraw from us.”

- Maya Angelou, *Wouldn't Take Nothing for My Journey Now*

My oldest daughter, as many of you know, has Down Syndrome. This diagnosis was made at birth and set all sorts of wheels in motion that I did not even know existed prior to her birth. Physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, preschool that began at twelve months old, special education, individual transportation, individual education plans, home and community based services, and finally supported community living. Cracking the code of what services were available and how to access them was not always an easy task. I was, and still am, always grateful for other parents and professionals who share information about programs that might benefit Molly. (And, usually, her family and her support network.)

When Molly was twelve years old, she came home from school and announced that she wanted to go to Camp Sunnyside to get “rested.” She handed me a brochure about a respite program for children with special needs. The respite program was designed to give a break to families who had children with special needs. After getting the pre-requisite doctor’s exam and filling out a number of waivers, Molly was off for a respite weekend.

The rest of the family decided not to plan a trip or special event because we knew that Molly enjoyed everything our family did just as much as, or even more than, the rest of us. Instead we distracted ourselves with un-fun tasks, stopping often to utter, “I wonder what Molly’s doing?” and “I hope Molly’s okay.” We tried to feel the relief we were supposed to experience by not having her around, but if anything, we were a bit more cantankerous with one another. It was odd. The family, excluding Molly, decided by Saturday afternoon that we did not like respite weekends. This would be the last one, the only one.

We were all waiting anxiously for her to arrive home Sunday evening. We’d made a favorite dinner, set an elegant table in the formal dining room – complete with lit candles, and had made a special banner that said, “Welcome Home Molly.” When the van arrived we all rushed out to help with luggage, sleeping bag and pillow. We kept hugging her and asking her if she’d had fun. We overwhelmed her.

When we got inside and escorted her to the dining room, she began to cry. Finally she was able to tell us, “I think I’m not done with my respite.” This respite was not only for the family to get a break from Molly, but for Molly to get a break from us. My eleven year old son got this. He suggested that we all eat our dinner in silence and let Molly be the first one to talk, when she was ready. It didn’t take long for her to tell us about respite. She summed up her experience in one sentence - she could do whatever she wanted to do whenever she wanted to do it. She chose to spend most of her time in the warm therapeutic swimming pool and in the arts cabin. She said everyone was very nice, very quiet. She wanted to go back again.

After that first weekend, the rest of our family learned to enjoy our own respite weekends whenever Molly went to Camp Sunnyside. Like Molly, we did whatever we wanted to do, whenever we wanted to do it.

Molly has lived by herself for the past five years. Even so, she still finds a need to take respites. Every now and again on a Friday evening she changes the message on her answering machine to say, “This is Molly’s phone. I’m having a respite. Don’t leave a message or call again until Sunday at 5.” My resolution for 2014? To put an occasional message on my voice mail that says, “This is Lori’s phone. I’m having a respite...”

Peace and respite to you in 2014,

- Lori Allen, Director of Youth and Children’s Ministries

## UU Parenting Group

This group is being discontinued because of very low numbers. If you have an interest in being involved in any sort of group where parents come together for fun, learning, support, or food – contact Lori and we'll find a way to make that happen.

### Thank you!

The teachers in our religious education classes deserve a big *thank you* for all the time and energy they put into helping our children and youth prepare for the “Stories of the Season” Intergenerational Service in December. I am always impressed with the creativity and talent of adults, children, and youth in our fellowship. So that you can say “thank you” to these important volunteers, here is a list of who's who in the UUFA religious education program:

At 9:15 am Grades 3-4: This class, aided by Raj Raman, Latifah Faisal, and Mary Raman, re-wrote “The Rebirth of the Sun.” Navvab Munirih narrated as the class filled roles of sun, sky, scenery, stage manager, and ensemble; Grades 5-6: This class, led by Beth Caissie, Becky Coppoc, and Ginny Molgaard, re-wrote “A Wish To Be A Christmas Tree” to include the PreK Class (Nicole Owens and Emily Knoop, teachers) to be small trees and Grades 1-2 (Betsy McLeod, Melissa Niesen, Jennifer Killion, and Mary Richards, teachers) to be woodland creatures. Grade 5-6 strung popcorn and cranberries for the tree and provided the narrators and musicians for the play. Grades 7-8 students Alexandria Coffman, Peter Jaynes, Caylee Fuqua, and Chiara Travasett were accompanied by Ethy Cannon and Peggy Earnshaw for a special music piece. (Anne Kimber, Diane Debinski, and Mike Todd are Grade 7-8 teachers.)

At 11:00 am, Donna Lutz and Liz Rohret, teachers for Grades 1-6, narrated a slightly different version of “A Wish To Be A Christmas Tree” as students in PreK – Grade 6 filled the roles of small trees and woodland creatures.

In a community where nurturing our children and youth and sharing our UU values and stories is such important work, please take a moment to say “thank you” to those who are dedicating their Sunday mornings to the children for this year.

## Religious Education News

Remember – all you need to know about children's and youth religious education programs and events is found at the following places. A reminder to check these places on the web is in each week's UUFA Email Update. The content on Facebook and at the UUFA website is the same. The website has other details about upcoming events as well.

UUFA Weekly Email that comes to each UUFA member and friend (upon request made through the office)

UUFA Website RE Page: <http://www.uufames.org/content/week-re>

UUFA Family Page on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/135782689797892/>

UUFA Youth Group Page on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/35940468676/>

If you have any questions, contact Lori Allen, Director of Youth and Children's Ministries. [dycm@uufames.org](mailto:dycm@uufames.org) or 515-292-5960 or Friend Me on Facebook - Lori Dycm-UUFA

## Year End Tax Statements and Pledge Updates

To be included in your 2013 statement of giving, contributions must be received in the office by December 31st. Statements will be available for pick up in the Fireside Room on January 5, in the office during office hours January 6-9, and in the Fireside Room on January 12. Remaining envelopes will be mailed on the 13th. If you have any questions, please contact Diana Crosswait, [projects@uufames.org](mailto:projects@uufames.org).

## Are You Ready for Membership? Youth Members We Need You!

As our bylaws are currently written, any person aged 14 or older who is in general sympathy with the UU Fellowship of Ames, is supportive of the UUA statement of principles, makes an annual contribution to our church operating fund and participates in the life our congregation may become a member of the congregation by receiving approval of the Board of Directors and signing the membership book. What does this all mean?

First, if you are 18 or older you can become an active member. Second, if you are 14-17 years of age you can become a youth member! Both active and youth members have access to all services provided by the congregation and are eligible to vote at congregational meetings on matters affecting the Fellowship.

The Membership Services Committee conducts two series of membership classes each year in order to help build community among those interested in membership and to ascertain who is in general sympathy and agreement with and in support of our mission and principles here. Those completing at least two of the three classes can choose to be recommended for membership by the Membership Services Committee and approved by the Board of Directors. Anyone can participate in new member classes and anyone can choose to be a Friend of the congregation rather than an active member.

We will soon be holding new member classes again, so if you are interested please let the office know and watch for the sign-up sheet in the Fireside room. We are actively working toward growing our youth membership and hope that all young people ages 14-17 will consider participating and becoming youth members. Conversations are being organized now to determine the best ways to achieve this, so if you are 14-17 and interested, let Lori Allen or Ella Bartlett know.

~ Faith Winchester, chair of Membership Services Committee

## Dustin Berger Memorial Library

*A Big New Free Happy Unusual Life*, by Nina Wise is an engaging book, appealing to my desire to learn more about self-expression and spiritual practice. She offers ten areas of exploration, each framed with her warm observations, insights, and practice helps. To connect more fully with ourselves and our world, she reminds us to relax, be silent, and then have fun with song, dance, poetry, visual arts, and with each other.

For long-time introverts, such as myself, she included small starts such as: hand-dancing, letting small movements enlarge to grandiose gestures and then back to small ones again (this is really liberating), any form of singing, an energetic doodle, sky-gazing, and a moment for gratitude.

“All we need do to remember who we are is to reconnect with the freedom within our hearts, which is always there, waiting for us to come home.”

This book is shelved at Dewey number 153.3 in our library.

~ Review by Diane Livingston

## Conscientious Crafters

On January 12, you are invited to bring your handiwork and join us after second service, 12:15 - 2:15 pm, in Classroom 3 for fellowship and relaxation. Whatever your level of expertise and whatever craft you enjoy, you are welcome. If you are looking for charitable projects in which to use your talents, we can offer ideas. If you are having problems with some aspect of your work, we often have folks who can help. We have donated supplies that you are welcome to use. We look forward to a fun and possibly productive afternoon together. Bring a sack lunch if you want. Contact Sue Ann Peck or Mary Richards if you have questions.

## Women's Book Group Members

The UU Women's Book Group starts the new year on January 6 in a light-hearted way with a discussion of the book *Bossy Pants* by Tina Fey.

Tina Fey's funny memoir includes anecdotes about her childhood, time as a comedian on Saturday Night Live and her hectic life juggling parenthood and a demanding career. Several of her stories are laugh-out-loud funny.

Come join us for a warm discussion on a cold night.

### UU Women's Book Group List 13-14

January 6: *Bossy Pants* by Tina Fey; February 3: *Bright-Sided* by Barbara Ehrenreich; March 3: *She's Not There* by Jennifer Finney Boylan; April 7: *Year of Magical Thinking* by Joan Didion; May 5: *Quiet* by Susan Cain; June 2: *End of Your Life Book Club* by Will Schwalbe

- Barbi Greenlaw, bluemoon\_1660@yahoo.com, 292-5317

## Social Justice News

In January, our collection plate split goes to ACCESS, Assault Care Extending Shelter and Support. Visit their website to learn more <http://www.assaultcarecenter.org/>

### Iowa UU Witness Advocacy Network, IUUWAN

I've just completed the articles of incorporation for an Iowa non profit. The next steps will be completing the IRS 501 (c) 3 status and then we need to get the word out and get organized.

Besides myself, we have Allan Hays of Cedar Falls and Sally Hartman of Iowa City on our initial board.

Help that we need:

We need an artist to create a logo.

We will need legal help to review our 501 (c) 3 application.

We will need some money for brochures, mailings and legal fees--approximately \$1500 to get us off the ground.

We need a website and emailing platform. We have a Facebook page, but it needs work as it's just bare bones right now: <https://www.facebook.com/IUUWAN> Please like us!

More than anything, we will need followers like you to make calls, send emails and lobby our representatives. To make our UU voice and values count, it would be ideal to have everyone do just a little (10-20 minutes a year) with a handful of people to do the heavy lifting.

## AMOS

January 28 AMOS' Project Iowa will be having graduation at DMAAC in Ankeny at 6 PM. I've been very impressed with Project Iowa--nurturing the unemployed and underemployed to place them in real careers with a living wage. Now it's personal because Mark's and my son, Julian, will be graduating. We think this is a miracle and if any of you would like to attend, we'd love to have you.

- Terry Lowman

Social Justice co-chair (James Phillips is the other co-chair)

## Good Neighbor Emergency Assistance, Inc. is on the move!

Good Neighbor has moved back downtown, in order to serve our neighbors more effectively. Please join the Director, Michael Fritz, and the Good Neighbor Board in an Open House at our new location, Sunday, January 12, 2014, 11:30 am – 2:30 pm, at 613 Clark Ave. (next to First Christian Church and across from Fareway). Thanks to the generosity of First Christian Church, who owns the property, Good Neighbor is now much more accessible to the Ames community.



Light refreshments will be served. We hope to see you there.

~ Lynne Van Valin

## Climate Action Team Forum

The UUFA Climate Action Team invites you to a forum Sunday January 19, immediately after second service; beginning with a light lunch (provided) at 12:30 and proceeding with 1 p.m. presentation by David Slade on biofuels.

~ Susan Franzen



## Plan Ahead to Enjoy a Sunday Fellowship Meal on these dates:

Goulash Meal - February 16

Soup Lunch - March 30

Stewardship Celebration/Farewell Luncheon - May 4

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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.*

**Minister:** the Rev. Kent McKusick .....minister@uufames.org – 515-292-8929  
**Director of Youth and Children's Ministries:** Lori Allen .....dycm@uufames.org – 515-292-5960  
**Youth Coordinator:** Julia Collett .....youth@uufames.org - 515-292-5960  
**Congregational Administrator:** Lisa Harmison ..... uufa@uufames.org – 515-292-5960  
**Projects Coordinator:** Diana Crosswait .....projects@uufames.org – 515-292-5960  
**Consulting Music Director:** Cynthia Marten .....music@uufames.org – 515-292-5960  
**Caring Concerns** ..... caring@uufames.org – 515-292-5960  
**Campus Group** .....campus@uufames.org – 515-292-5960  
**Board of Directors** ..... board@uufames.org

#### Officers of the Board

President	Joel Geske
Vice president	Amber Anderson Mba
Past president	Lisa Larson
Secretary	Becky Coppoc
Treasurer	Ralph Gandy

#### Board Members

Andrew Denison	through 2015
Jamie Gurganus	through 2014
Wesley Shank	through 2015
David Slade	through 2014
Amy Slagell	through 2014
Ella Bartlett	youth representative

**Next Regular Board Meeting:**  
**January 8, 2014, 6:30 pm**

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