Annual Report to the Congregation 2018

Presented at the Annual Meeting, December 16, 2018
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ames

1015 North Hyland Avenue  |  Ames, Iowa 50014
515.292.5960  |  uufa@uufames.org

Office Hours:
Monday – Thursday  |  10:00 – 4:00
Friday  |  9:00 – 12:00

Board of Directors:
board@uufames.org

Minister:
Rev. Kent C. McKusick
515.292.8929  |  minister@uufames.org

Religious Education Coordinator:
Janelle Carlson
515.423.0490  |  recoordinator@uufames.org

Congregational Administrator:
Bradley Duckstein
515.292.5960  |  uufa@uufames.org

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2018 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

We express our deepest gratitude for your dedicated service, genuine concern and interest, and for your ongoing commitment to the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ames. Your Fellowship thanks you!

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<td>President</td>
<td>Ben Woline</td>
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<td>Melissa Niesen</td>
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<td>Past President</td>
<td>Sam Wormley</td>
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<td>Secretary-Treasurer</td>
<td>Dave Fox</td>
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<td>Member at large, through 2018</td>
<td>Ralph Gandy</td>
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<td>Sue Koehrsen</td>
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<td>Member at large, through 2019</td>
<td>Molly Helmers</td>
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<td>Angie Poole</td>
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<td>Youth Representative</td>
<td>Alexandria Coffman</td>
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<td>Minister, ex officio</td>
<td>Rev. Kent C. McKusick</td>
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<td>Cong. Admin., ex officio</td>
<td>Bradley Duckstein</td>
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FROM THE MINISTER

In the seventh year of our ministry together, we have shared another year of joy, challenge, and change. Last year as a congregation, you approved a new vision statement after a year of work together with your Board. This statement offers the vision of how we can live into the mission of this Fellowship: to grow spiritually, create community, strive for justice, and learn to love.

It has been my great pleasure to serve as chief of staff and work with two excellent employees: Bradley Duckstein, UUFA Congregational Administrator, and Janelle Carlson, RE Coordinator. They have served the membership with consistency and excellence and often go well beyond the call of duty. I offer my deepest gratitude to them and my congratulations for their professionalism and dedication to this Fellowship. It was also a pleasure to work with Colleen Hamilton, Membership Development Coordinator, for six months. During her brief tenure and in collaboration with the Membership Committee, we made significant changes and expanded our approach to welcoming visitors on the path to membership. I look forward to engaging the hiring process to fill this position and continue our commitments to membership growth.

It has also been a pleasure to work in collaboration with your Board. This team of Fellowship representatives has served willingly and with dedication on your behalf, leading in a way that supports the future of UUFA. In this report, I offer some highlights of our year together in support of our mission.

Growing Spiritually

Monthly thematic ministry has been supported by our enrollment in Soul Matters. We receive monthly resources that guide my study, shape Sunday services, and offer discussion guides for Soul Matters Listening Circles. This year, there are five lay led listening circles. I am very thankful for the volunteer facilitators: Sue Koehrsen, Erin Pederson, Kate Niman, and Jonah Powell who lead the adult groups and Mary Richards, Navvab Munirih, and Peggy Earnshaw who offer Soul Matters for kids.

The year started off thematically with what it means to be a community of intention and how each moment offers the opportunity to have an intentional and new beginning. This theme set the spiritual tone and message of hope for the year. Much of my year was dedicated to finding hope in a challenging world, utilizing themes such as perseverance, balance, creativity, blessing, sanctuary, and memory. With Sunday services, I have striven to incorporate more creative and collaborative approaches to the spiritual themes that support the covenantal values of our mission statement and the UU principles.
A new affinity group, facilitated by Paul Nelson and Jennifer Killian, was formed to explore a UU perspective on the teachings of Jesus.

With General Assembly being held in Kansas City, Sue Koehrsen and I worked together to communicate the significance of this annual meeting and encouraged people to attend. A full slate of delegates from UUFA attended all or part of GA. It was a pleasure to experience the services, workshops, justice work, and camaraderie of a national event with members (Sue Koehrsen, Amy Slagell, Molly Helmers, Kitty Fisher, Erv Klaas, Alexandria Coffman, Jonah Powell, Jane Lohnes, and Mary Richards). In September, a service was presented that offered what we experienced, observed, and brought back from General Assembly.

One of the most spiritual experiences of the year was making a pilgrimage to visit our partner church in Tordátfalva, Romania to celebrate the anniversary of 450 years of religious tolerance and freedom, and to spend Thanksgiving with them, one of the four most holy days of their religious year. Rev. Lajos honored me by inviting me to offer the Thanksgiving sermon and assist in the serving of communion. I shared the sermon and experience during our Thanksgiving service in November. Bringing back firsthand stories of my experiences there is a form of spiritual storytelling and exploration of Unitarian Christianity as one of the sources of our Living Tradition. It was my pleasure to present a gift from the members of our partner church, a Kopjafa, which is a symbolic peace pole of connection between us. They have a matching one on-site in Tordátfalva.

The Fellowship Voices represent one of the strongest collaborations between volunteers as they prepare and perform a monthly piece of choral music. They continue to challenge and stretch themselves and offer a beautiful variety of music that supports the theme of the month. I am very thankful for their excellence and contributions to Sunday mornings.

Kitty Fisher and Ginny Molgaard continued as the coordinators for special music on Sundays and have brought musicians from within and outside the Fellowship, including Women in the Round and the UUFA Recorder Consort. Music is an essential part of Sunday morning and is alive and well at UUFA.

The Sunday Service Committee has been invaluable in supporting the Sunday morning experience at UUFA. This is a talented group of individuals who assist me in shaping, presenting, and evaluating the services. They create meaningful services when I am not in the pulpit at least once a month and during my summer vacation. This year, on the way back from vacation, we learned that my father-in-law was in his final days, and James and I were called to Texas. I am ever thankful for the professionalism, flexibility, and the willingness of the Sunday Service Committee to serve beyond and above the call of duty. Through the year, they presented a broad spectrum of engaging themes and topics that included music, poetry, movement, Hinduism,
Buddhism, the living soil, and active hope. Their excellent work together welcomed summer visitors who continued to explore membership upon my return.

Creating Community

The Next Steps Weekend (building a culture of stewardship) involved a telephone interview with our consultant, Mark Ewing, prior to his visit to the fellowship. It was a pleasure to participate with him in the Friday night board session and the Sunday feedback session. It was a very positive and useful weekend, and I look forward to working with him when he returns to work with us in February.

With several other leaders of the Fellowship, I attended Mark Ewert’s stewardship webinar on year-round planning. I will be working with the Sunday Service Committee to integrate messages of appreciation for stewardship throughout the year in sermons, stories, and readings. Testimonials throughout the year provided by members of the Fellowship sharing “why I am here and why I give” will contribute to a stewardship culture shift.

In preparation for the upcoming sabbatical (Feb. 18 through June), the Board approved the following individuals to serve on the Sabbatical Committee: Karen Bates, Sunday Service Committee; Jamie Gurganus, Caring Network; Sam Wormley, Past President; Brenda Witherspoon, member of the last Sabbatical Committee; Ralph Gandy, Finance; and Bradley Duckstein, ex officio.

According to the UUA Sabbatical Workbook: “The sabbatical committee will work with the minister and other staff to see that all the necessary preparations are proceeding, that the important questions are being asked and responded to, and that communication about developing plans is frequent and informative.” The sabbatical committee also prepares the brochure describing the sabbatical plans of the church and the minister.

During the sabbatical, the committee will meet regularly to check that tasks are being carried out, and that staff and committees feel that they are sufficiently supported, guided, and appreciated.

In the October meeting of the Iowa UU Ministers, I invited members to consider preaching at UUFA while I am on sabbatical. Sharing our ministerial gifts with the congregations we serve are excellent growth opportunities for us as ministers and for the congregations we serve. Eleven ministers, including UU ministers outside of our cluster, have agreed to be guests in our pulpit while I am away. It is an exciting opportunity for you to hear other UU voices and for the ministers of other congregations to experience UUFA.
In March, we hired Colleen Hamilton as Membership Development Coordinator. During her six months of service, we developed a more comprehensive system of welcome letters and follow-up with visitors to encourage their continued participation and path to membership. A new Membership Exploration Class was developed. Based on best practices utilized at other UU congregations, the class was streamlined to a single half-day session class which will be offered quarterly. The Membership Committee enthusiastically offered support and participated in the class, which has been offered twice and already been further adjusted to better serve the participants and the Fellowship.

In November after Colleen’s resignation, the Board approved the adjustment of the Membership Development Coordinator to being a quarter-time position that is responsible only for membership development. The financial aspect of the job (accounts receivable) is being handled by a volunteer, Stephanie Fox, a member of the Finance Committee. I am very thankful for her generosity and expertise. The membership position has been posted. I am hopeful that it will be filled before I leave on sabbatical.

Janelle Carlson, RE Coordinator, and I completed the process of hiring an RE intern, Tess Taylor, a senior at ISU. This was arranged through the ISU Department of Human Development and Family Studies and had no budget impact. Tess worked with children and youth on Sundays and was instrumental in developing and facilitating Wednesday night family programming and the youth summer camp. She also served as co-facilitator of the high school youth group. This first internship was very successful. I hope that we will be able to pursue future internships through the university.

The Board has approved a succession plan when Janelle leaves her position in July. It is a viable plan that will maintain the continuity and excellence of the program and serve the families of the Fellowship.

On the Friday of Labor Day weekend, Tom and Doug presented a fundraising concert event. It was a truly enjoyable retrospective of their 35 years of making music and entertaining. The program offered a mixture of videos from past years with live singing and storytelling. Roughly 40 people attended, and $419 was raised for the endowment fund.

I had the honor and pleasure of participating in the ordination of the Rev. Lois Cole by the Iowa City congregation on May 12. My part was to introduce the offertory for the Living Tradition Fund and to offer the ceremonial Right Hand of Fellowship into UU ministry.

The Iowa Cluster of UU Ministers meets monthly in Cedar Rapids or Iowa City to offer each other support as a community of ministers. While the Rev. Eva Cameron was on sabbatical, I was the convener of these meetings using Zoom video technology when it was not convenient to travel. Additionally, I
attended two groups of the Ames Area Religious Leaders Association (AARLA) and participated in the annual Martin Luther King Day interfaith service.

**Striving for Justice**

Mary Richards and I facilitated a multi-session book discussion of *Waking up White*. It was an engaging experience and a very positive approach to address issues of white privilege and the culture of white supremacy.

I was part of a large group from UUFA attending an AMOS house meeting on mental health at Bethesda Lutheran.

It was a pleasure to be part of an interfaith group of 10 people to participate in a meeting with Brian Dieter, the President and CEO of Mary Greeley Hospital. The meeting was organized by Liz Hall, Sue Ann Peck, and AMOS. We met to discuss Mary Greeley’s plans to improve and increase the availability of mental health care in our community. It was a very positive meeting, where Dieter was receptive and outlined future plans. He seemed genuinely impacted by the story of a young man in crisis who had been turned away.

I have attended the Transgender, Non-binary, and Allies of Ames meetings which are hosted by UUFA. Freddi Funnell is leading this excellent support group that brings many non-UU’s into our building and who feel supported, as a result.

The General Assembly program schedule had a significant number of social justice programs helpful to the ministry we all share: discerning when to say yes or no to initiatives; interfaith organizing to dismantle white supremacy; growing UU congregations for the 21st century; the theology of faith, race, and liberation; and stewardship, justice, and white supremacy.

I attended Ministry Days (prior to GA) and attended programming that explored the intersections of theology, ethics, and culture as we celebrate the 450th anniversary of the Edict of Torda. I participated in “sacred civil disobedience” to support those in Kansas City who have long struggled with racism, gentrification, and poverty.

Erv Klaas led the Action of Immediate Witness process on the climate change resolution. The delegation and I joined him in the effort and process. Even though this action was not chosen, it was a worthwhile experience and important to note that actions related to climate change were chosen by the assembly.

On September 8th, Erv Klaas and the UUFA Climate Solutions Circle presented a half day workshop: Rise for Climate Jobs and Justice. Almost 90 people attended. It was an interfaith event with several different faith traditions represented in Fellowship Hall. It was my pleasure to offer the welcome and
frame the work for climate change as an ethical and moral issue. Matt Russell, director of Iowa Interfaith Power and Light, moderated the event and guided the group discussion portion of the event. Action items for local activism were shared and discussed.

The trip to Romania continues to influence my inclusion of justice related material in the services, whether it be the candle of resistance and hope or stories woven thematically into the services.

**Learning to Love**

Janelle Carlson, RE Coordinator, organized and presented Safety Day for RE teachers and facilitators. After the annual teacher orientation, there were three sessions offered. Officer Nick Schieffer, the ACSD Resource Officer, offered an important presentation on active shooter training. A representative from Connections Matter addressed how trauma and adverse childhood experiences affect a child’s learning environment. There was also a basic class on first aid. It was an excellent day of learning, despite a relatively low number of attendees.

Sabbatical is a form of self care and love, which benefits both a minister and their congregation. A sabbatical is not extended vacation or highly focused study leave. It is designed to foster rest, reflection, renewal, and an opportunity to break away from routine and heavy responsibilities. Typically it includes travel and provides the opportunity for formal learning and cultural enrichment. The goals are inner healing, new insights and perspectives, and a fresh energy.

The upcoming sabbatical offers the opportunity to reaffirm my call to ministry and return with a fresh perspective for my final years serving the Fellowship. Some of my intentions are to reflect on the trip to Romania and study early Unitarianism; participate in a Living Legacy Pilgrimage to Civil Rights Movement sites in Mississippi; attend a preaching retreat; visit other congregations formed as part of the Fellowship Movement; make a personal retreat to Maine; and to see as much theatre as possible.

Pastoral care is an essential and often unseen part of ministry. Accompanying members and their loved ones who are touched by illness or death on this journey of life, or who simply need someone to be with them, is one of the most meaningful aspects of ministry. By providing this care, I continue to connect with and deeply love this community. I am thankful for the collaborative efforts of the UUFA Caring Network in this aspect of ministry.

With sadness and joyful remembrance, we celebrate the lives of Clair Keller, Janet Klaas, Tom Flack, Diane Mumm, and Barney Cook. We are filled with gratitude for the many contributions these individuals made to Fellowship life throughout the years. May their memories be blessed.
It was my pleasure to officiate the wedding of Faris Winchester and Brandon Russom and for a number of non-member couples seeking non-traditional or multi-faith weddings. We wish them all that love and life has to offer.

Thank you for another year of ministry. It is my pleasure and honor to serve as your minister, and I look forward to the years ahead.

In faith and the ministry we share,

Rev. Kent C. McKusick
November 26, 2018

FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Two years ago we started the process to identify our mission and vision. I use the word identify purposefully because I do not believe that this fundamental sense of who we are can be something that we say we are going to be ... we simply brought words to what is already at our core:

Our Fellowship helps each of us
grow spiritually, create community,
strive for justice, and learn to love.

I am grateful for the leadership of Jan Vine and Sam Wormley who helped us clarify these tenets at our foundation. I am excited each and every time that I get to hear about how we are living that mission and vision. These stories help remind us of how our Fellowship is unique, how what we offer matters to the community, how we help each other ... and that it is important to support all that we do. What is your Fellowship story? What draws you out of isolation, transcends you from individualism, and brings you into community?

I like to think about the purpose of the UUFA as a community committed to developing tolerant, pluralistic, critical thinkers. For me, our greatest legacy can be the lives we have touched, who then help shape an accepting and understanding society. To accomplish this, we must be challenging each other to seek out alternative perspectives, and to recognize the value that brings. We cannot simply be an echo chamber telling each other only what we want to hear. Our legacy deserves more. And being a steward of that legacy means that each of us has a responsibility to build upon what we, as current members, have inherited. Can we live up to the boldness, generosity, and caring of previous generations?

Can we step-up our volunteerism to offer the programming that we desire? Instead of saying, “I wish we would offer,” or worse, “I can’t believe we don’t
offer ...” I encourage you to instead ask, “How can I help? How do I start a new program? Or, even though my kids are grown, how can I help ensure that our Religious Education is shaping the next generation to be the leaders that we truly need? Or, I want to ensure that our youth understand the importance of giving back to the community, what programs can I offer to teach them about Social Justice? Or, how can my talents help our building and grounds committees?” You have talents to share, and we will all be better if we can have some of your time.

This past year, your Board of Directors has been focused on how we can start reframing all of our relationships with stewardship and what that can truly mean. We are beginning to understand how this sense of stewardship over what we have inherited can help align our values, beliefs, and loves ... with our resources. A gift of time and financial commitment is an expression of belief in all that we do for each other, for the community, and for the world. Most recently, the Board has established a Generosity Team to help us delve deeper into understanding what makes our Fellowship unique, what drives us as a community, and to help identify opportunities for increased engagement.

It has been a privilege to serve alongside each of the other Directors as we strive to be good stewards of the legacy of our Fellowship. I am grateful for the energy, passion, and dedication that each person showed throughout the year. It has been a pleasure.

I want to thank all of the volunteers from this past year. To those who served on committees, supported Sunday Service, taught Religious Education, engaged in a discussion group, cared for each other, enhanced our building and grounds, or supported us in innumerable other ways; you are all appreciated. Our Fellowship is only as strong as our volunteers. Your dedication helps us build a vibrant community.

And to our staff; Kent, Bradley, Janelle, and Colleen. Your leadership, support, guidance, and expertise helps ensure the efficient and smooth running of our Fellowship. Your patience, dedication, and love for this community is felt. Thank you.

Finally, to each of us as members. Each of us has stories of how this fellowship has improved our lives by offering something that is unique in the community that can’t be found anywhere else. It is these stories that shape who we truly are, and what legacy we are upholding. I encourage you to reflect on your story, on what the Fellowship has offered you, and then, be bold, and share that story. It is through offering these new perspectives for each other that we can be committed to developing tolerant, pluralistic, critical thinkers.

Yours in service, -Ben Woline
FROM THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COORDINATOR

This past October marked my 3rd completed year as Religious Education Coordinator for the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ames. I have continued my mission to support religious education by working with teachers, childcare providers, and office staff to operate the programming for birth-12th grade. I have worked closely with Rev. Kent McKusick and the RE committee to plan the yearly program for Preschool – 8th grade students, coordinated volunteer teachers, assisted the high school youth group with their special events, supervised and supported an unpaid youth and family intern, and supervised paid childcare staff in the nursery and preschool classrooms. This year 136 children and youth were officially enrolled in our Religious Education programs from birth - 12th grade. There were a record number of 47 students who attended the first day of RE classes in 2018 (compared to 30 in 2017, and 17 in 2016).

Along with ensuring that programming is running smoothly on Sunday mornings, my goals for 2018 have been to maintain and expand the high-quality RE programming offered beyond Sunday mornings. Specific ways that I have maintained the program are by assisting teachers in implementing a comprehensive and engaging Unitarian Universalist curriculum, increasing attendance and participation in RE, and collaborating with families to offer more intergenerational activities. My goals for expanding the program offerings in 2018 were to offer a children's summer camp and to add a youth and family intern to our program. Both of these goals were achieved this year with our intern, Tess, as an instrumental part of it all.

Youth and Family Intern

I supervised our first Youth and Family Intern, Tess Taylor, who worked closely with the high school youth group and assisted in the development and implementation of a week-long summer camp program. Tess collaborated with me to help support the youth and families of the UUFA from March-July. Along with working closely with the high school youth group, her main project was assisting in the planning and implementation of a UUFA summer camp. This unpaid internship was a capstone experience required for Tess to graduate with her degree in Child, Adult, and Family Services from Iowa State University. While we benefited greatly from her involvement in our program, we also provided Tess training and support as she gained experience working with youth and families. At the end of her internship with us, Tess started a position working with Children and Families of Iowa in Osceola, Iowa.
Summer Camp

This summer I worked closely with our youth and family intern to plan and implement the first Let the Force be with UU summer camp. Campers met Monday, July 23rd through Friday, July 27th from 4:30 – 8pm each night. The camp welcomed about 40 kids (both members and non-members) in grades K-9. Participants were provided daily dinner, a t-shirt, and Star Wars-themed activities centered on the UU principles. Campers participated in 4 activity rotations that consisted of: a craft, music, movement, and meditation. This program was made possible thanks to over 25 volunteers who assisted with preparing materials, teaching in large and small groups, and clean up.

Safety Day

I, along with the RE committee, organized a Safety Day for the RE teachers and all members of the congregation. Everyone was invited to the first UUFA Safety Day on August 25th. Two trainings were offered to everyone at the UUFA: A.L.I.C.E (violence response) training, facilitated by Ames Police officer Nick Schieffer and Connections Matter, facilitated by Lora Kracht from Prevent Child Abuse Iowa. Connections Matter focuses on the importance of community and relationships, and how these connections matter in development of a child’s brain and coping mechanisms later on. RE teachers were also offered first aid certification training in the afternoon conducted by Lou Greco. Safety Day had 15 attendees in total. While this was fewer than the RE committee had hoped, we look forward to continuing and growing this event in the future.

Intergenerational Events

Intergenerational events have been a huge success this past year. 2018 marked the beginning of a new intergenerational program offering for families: Fellowship Family Night. This program is open to all members of the UUFA and geared towards families of all ages. Families gather together on Wednesday night to enjoy a meal together and then participate in a variety of activities. Twice a month, childcare is provided after the meal where children participate in craft and yoga activities while parents participate in a discussion group. The other weeks center on intergenerational experiences.

The annual Secret Friends program matched 20 children to adults in the month-long community building event, which culminated in a fun reveal party. Secret Friends participants collected children’s books, which were donated to the Ames Community School District backpack program.

In 2017 Rev. McKusick and I planned and implemented Flamekeepers into the RE programming at the UUFA. Flamekeepers is an RE program for 2-5th graders which consists of 4 sessions and an accompanying workbook for
students to explore with their families at home. Last fall, 10 youth learned more about our living tradition by exploring the principles, sources, and the ritual of a chalice lighting. Throughout 2018, these students have taken an active role by lighting the chalice at Sunday morning services throughout the year.

Our annual Religious Education service in May gave students a chance to showcase their talents and share what their classes have learned throughout the school year. The Kindergarten classroom shared one of their favorite stories, *The Rainbow Fish*, during a time for all ages. The 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> grade class played a game of 20 questions while talking about important symbols of UU. The 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade hosted the ‘RE Tonight Show’ to share about the different religious communities they visited throughout the year. And the 6-8<sup>th</sup> graders shared a mini-popcorn theology lesson with the congregation using clips from *Field of Dreams*.

**Sunday Morning Programming**

This year’s RE curriculum was created using a variety of available UU resources and based on the interests of the students in each grade. Due to the high number of students that are involved this year (September 2018- May 2019), we regrouped the classrooms into different age groups from last year (September 2017- May 2018). Below is a summary of each classroom and the teachers that are working with that age group.

**Kindergarten & First Grade** (**Curriculum: Around the Church, Around the Year**)

*Teachers: Cheryl Lawson, Suzanne Zilber, and Nancy Tepper*

This curriculum helps our youngest students understand the faith and practices of Unitarian Universalism by helping them engage in their UU community. Children focus on their own experiences with building relationships, exploring their personal identity, and being a community member. As the year unfolds, students will gain an appreciation for Unitarian Universalist people, buildings, rituals, and celebrations.

**Second & Third Grade** (**Curriculum: Spirit of Adventure: Discovering UU Identity through Active Learning**)

*Teachers: Andi Todd, Erin Pederson, and Allison Brundy*

Children in this class will continue to develop their UU identity through active learning with an emphasis on the UU Principles and Sources. Students are engaged though active projects such as: sports, medicine, food and science.

**Fourth & Fifth Grade** (**Curriculum: Holy Days and Holidays**)

*Teachers: Christopher Chase, Jane Runneals, and Molly Helmers*

This program has students learning about the origins and meanings of holiday and holy day celebrations. They will experience festivities and
transitions through stories, food, music, crafts, and ceremony. By learning about and celebrating important days from around the world, students will be able to practice living the principles and find their own place in Unitarian Universalism.

Sixth, Seventh & Eighth Grade (Curriculum: Popcorn Theology and Popcorn Theology Too: the Sequel)
Teachers: Mike Todd, Krisdeena Jansen, Jamie Niman, and Chris McClure
Students in this class explore issues of theology and ethics through film. Teachers are able to select from films recommended in the curriculum and lead discussions after viewing selected scenes with students (while eating popcorn of course!)

Soul Matters for Kids:
Teachers: Mary Richards, Navvab Munirih, and Peggy Earnshaw
The last Sunday of each month students in preschool-grade 5 are gathered together in the Soul Matters for Kids large group. They focus on the monthly theme from Soul Matters as students of all ages explore related stories, songs and activities.

Childcare: This year we have had an excellent and enthusiastic childcare staff who have provided care for our nursery and preschool children. Caylee Fuqua, Alexandria Coffman, and Ravn Kennedy have continued on this year as high school youth childcare providers. We have Samantha Cepeda, Micaela Price, Alain Mattimiro who have continued as childcare providers throughout the year. Over the summer we added Robin Ubben Kennedy, Leah Hassevoort, and Celeste Chadwick to our childcare team. All childcare providers have assisted with RE programs on Sunday morning, the nursery, Fellowship Family Night, Soul Matters movie night, and other UUFA special events.

Religious Education Committee

I have worked closely with the committee to guide and implement RE programming at the UUFA. These dedicated individuals have been willing to assist the RE in any way that has been needed. A few of our successes this past year have been constructing safety guidelines for the program, organizing the Safety Day event, and coordinating a teacher appreciation brunch following the RE service in May. In an effort to better communicate and welcome new families to the UUFA, we have also developed an updated RE brochure outlining the current program offering for RE.

Professional Development

This year I have pursued two different professional development opportunities that have influenced how I guide and support the religious
education program. I engaged in a self-study program focused on the RE Road Map, a guide for religious educators. This curriculum encouraged me to reflect and modify the organization of our religious education classes and helped build vision for strategies to sustain our current program. I also participated in a webinar series The Death of Sunday School, which focused on the needs of modern families and how our liberal religious education program can be modified to best meet those needs. This information helped me in planning and supporting more intergenerational events that involve families interacting together.

**Looking Ahead**

For personal reasons, I am planning on resigning my position as religious education coordinator in the summer of 2019. In the coming year, I am looking forward to working closely with the Religious Education Committee to make this transition as seamless as possible. We will be working to continue meeting the needs of children and families of the UUFA with a variety of engaging and relevant programs. I am thankful for the many volunteers and participants who make the RE program come alive including RE teachers, RE committee members, and of course our children and families!

~Janelle Carlson

FROM THE ADMINISTRATIVE & PROPERTY CLUSTER

Committees whose missions support the administrative and property concerns of the congregation.

BUILDING COMMITTEE

**Contact:** building@uufames.org

**Mission:** The committee is responsible for the non-emergency, non-urgent maintenance and long-term upkeep of the building and its façade.

**Meeting time for 2019:** Fourth Sunday of the month, 12:30 p.m., or as needed

**Committee Members:** Sally Daub, Sue Koehrsen (board liaison), Donald Lewis, Dennis Lindeman, Craig Mushel (chair)

**Report Submitted by:** Craig Mushel, Bradley Duckstein
Major Accomplishments for 2018:

- Installed smart thermostats building-wide
- Painted upstairs entry way (by red doors) and installed display for Memorial Garden
- Disassembled, sealed, and reassembled nursery balcony railing for prevention from wasp infestation
- Installed changing station in restroom on main level
- Following a failed connection in PEX plumbing lines that flooded main kitchen and office below, had plumber replace all of this type of connector, building-wide. We were fortunate that Rev. Kent was present soon after the leak started, so cleanup could begin immediately and damage was minimal. Otherwise, we would likely have seen damage to the level of our flood 7 or 8 years ago, which was caused by the same issue. Being proactive in replacing the PEX connectors should help prevent future catastrophe.
- Repaired drywall and texture in several locations throughout the building.
- Installed water leak alarms near all fixtures

Looking Ahead to 2019:

- Misc. electrical work (contracted), including rewiring new LED fixtures in Fellowship Hall to be independently controlled.
- Replace exterior light fixtures by exit doors
- Further exploring fire alarm system monitoring options
- Emergency door replacements in Fellowship Hall and Fireside Room
- Railing extension from upper level of Fireside Room to lower level (near library)
- Painting projects, building-wide
- Repair of Fellowship Hall draperies
- Establish time table & solicit additional bids for roof replacement
- Establish time table for replacement of dish sanitizer
- Establish time table for replacement of main level twinned HVAC units

Contact: grounds@uufames.org

Mission: The committee is responsible for all issues relating to the exterior of the building (not including the building façade), continuing to maintain, protect, and enhance the grounds surrounding the UUFA.

Meeting Time for 2019: As needed

Committee Members: Cheryl Lawson, Sally Daub, Catherine Huisman (special projects)

Report Submitted by: Cheryl Lawson
2018 Accomplishments:
- Refurbished and installed our peace poll in the Memorial Garden and prepared the garden for a dedication ceremony (held June 3rd) where eleven memorial stones were placed in the garden
- Hired a tree service to remove a tree that hangs over the top of building
- Hired Garden Therapy (owner Tom Jordan) to maintain Memorial Garden
- With the help of several volunteers, trimmed, planted, weeded and mulched garden areas
- With the help of volunteers, brush was cut from the north parking lot
- Hired a new snow plow service provider

Looking Ahead to 2019:
- Recruit and organize volunteers to help improve and maintain the grounds
- Work with Garden Therapy to plan improvements to the Memorial Garden and oversee maintenance of the garden
- Cut brush back from north parking lot and trim trees on north end of lot
- Remove invasive species from back hillside and maintain trail
- Fix uneven walkway
- Fix erosion problem along south-east side of lower parking lot

Contact: library@uufames.org

Mission: The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ames Dustin Berger Memorial Library will provide a place and resources for members and friends to explore the seven principles and six sources of our faith. It will provide an environment that is accessible, helpful, and multimedia in nature. The library committee will provide policies, structures, and assistance to live up to this mission statement.

Meeting Time for 2019: Second Saturday of each month, 9:30-12:00

Committee Members: Barb Abbott (chair), Roger Berger, Carol Elbert, Sue Koehrsen, Jean Peterson, Susan Posch

Report Submitted by: Barb Abbott, Sue Koehrsen

2018 Accomplishments:
- Maintained collection with new titles and weeding to update
- Wrote reviews and other articles for UUFA newsletter to encourage use
- Networked with other central Iowa church librarians (fall meeting)
- Participated in Banned Books week with a Sunday morning open house
- Produced printed catalog of the collection
Looking Ahead to 2019:
- Continue to maintain and add to the collection (donations and purchases) with emphasis on resources to support Soul Matters themes
- Write reviews and other articles for UUFA newsletter
- Increase visibility of library
- Encourage use of library
- Refine system to encourage return of materials
- Provide estimate for the UU Board for a lift (accessibility) long term; shorter term add improved railings for safer access on stairway

FROM THE COMMUNITY BUILDING CLUSTER

Committees whose missions support congregational commitments to caring, connectedness, and fostering healthy relationships.

CARING NETWORK

Contact: caring@uufames.org

Mission: The Caring Network facilitates a ministry of hope and caring within the Fellowship, helping members to both support each other and be supported in times of joy, sorrow, loss or other life transition.

Vision: The Caring Network, working closely with the minister, quickly and appropriately responds to member needs as its resources allow. It seeks out and uses the most effective ways to help congregants care for each other and to provide ministry through cards, visits, transportation, meals, pastoral care, support for memorials and receptions, and assistance with special short term caring needs.

Meeting time for 2019: Second Thursday of each month, 5:30 pm

Report Submitted by: Jamie Gurganus

Committee Members: Rev. Kent McKusick (ex-officio), Rilla Fox (Compassionate Companions), Jamie Gurganus (chair; lead coordinator), Jonah Powell (general coordinator), Lynne Van Valin (cards & correspondence), Joan Mathews (resigned in June), Lisa Harmison (resigned in September)

Overall Congregational Involvement: About 50-100 other Fellowship members provide support (cards, food, transportation, etc.) when alerted to do so by a committee member, or act as point people for these and other areas of caring.

As a response to the Next Steps Weekend workshop, the Caring Network began hosting (starting in May) a table on Sunday mornings. The table has two forms for people to complete: one to notify the committee of a
joy/concern of a congregant, the second to sign up to provide service in our areas of caring for each other.

**Meals:** The Caring Network continues to provide meals to congregants following a new baby, hospitalization, or death.

**Cards:** Lynne Van Valin continues to send out card requests to her mailing list. Cards of sympathy, get well, new baby, and congratulations are sent as we are notified of congregants’ joys/concerns.

**Memorial Services:** This year, the Fellowship hosted three member (Clair Keller, Janet Klaas, and Dianne Mumm) and two former member (Tom Flack and Barney Cook) memorial services, also providing receptions afterward. Brenda Witherspoon and Sarah Carlson are the co-coordinators for the logistics of the services. The larger committee is currently in search of a coordinator for receptions. In the meantime, Jamie Gurganus has fulfilled those duties. We are also looking for additional helpers for services (i.e. setup, cleanup, etc.).

**Welcoming New Babies:** Under previous staffing models, the Director of Religious Education or Director of Children & Youth Ministries visited families with new babies. Since current staffing models do not include this position, the Caring Network has been covering the visits.

**Transportation:** Lee Molgaard and Dave Fox remain the co-coordinators for arranging in-town and out-of-town rides for members.

**Outreach Cards:** The Caring Network continues to send out handwritten cards of thanks, appreciation, congratulations, etc. to people of all ages in the congregation. For example, we sent Outreach cards to several of our youth for their accomplishments in music, academics or sports in school. We also thanked many of the Sunday morning volunteers and office staff whose efforts often go unrecognized. We have heard that the cards are greatly appreciated.

**Compassionate Companions:** This group contacts Fellowship members who are experiencing life-threatening illness issues for themselves or loved ones, or are dealing with end-of-life issues, providing a listening ear and a conduit to needed resources.

They planned and facilitated the Get ‘Em Done: Advanced Directives workshop on April 19 and May 3. The workshop, led by Rilla Fox, was well attended. Rilla was also asked to hold the same workshop at the Ames Public Library. The group also held the Who Cares? workshop on October 8, which had 13 participants. This workshop was a listening circle/Soul Matters/Death café workshop that allowed participants to discuss various topics amongst those at their table.
CONGREGATIONAL LIFE COMMITTEE

Contact: congregationallife@uufames.org

Mission: The Congregational Life Committee fosters opportunities for congregants to build relationships and connect with each other through UUFA social activities and special events. Specifically, the committee is responsible for a) the disbursement of monies from the “Dream It Up and Do It Fund” and b) developing best practices for organizing Fellowship events.

Committee Members: Joel Geske, Jane Runneals, Amanda Hassid

Meeting time for 2019: As needed

HEALTHY RELATIONS TEAM

Contact: hrt@uufames.org

Mission: The Healthy Relations Team mission is to promote the well-being and emotional safety of the UUFA by assisting congregants in addressing and constructively resolving conflict in order to foster healthy relationships within our community.

Committee Members: Jan Cook (chair), Jonah Powell, Faith Winchester

Meeting time for 2019: As needed

MEMBERSHIP SERVICES COMMITTEE

Contact: membershipservices@uufames.org

Mission: The Membership Services Committee welcomes, guides, facilitates, and encourages membership in the congregation of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ames.

Meeting Time for 2019: As needed

Committee Members: Danelda Allen (since 2018), Karen Bates (since 2017), Peggy Earnshaw (since 2014), Jamie Gurganus (since 2015), Cindy Scholten (since 2000), Carol Spencer (since 2018), Faith Winchester (chair; member since 2012)

Report Submitted by: Faith Winchester
2018 Accomplishments:
- March: Our first Member Development Coordinator was hired and began to work with the office staff and Membership Services Committee to make changes in how we welcome and follow up with visitors and newcomers.
- June 10: New member exploration class in new format
- September 8: New member exploration class held in new format
- October 14: New Member Sunday, welcoming 11 new members to the congregation

Looking Ahead to 2019:
- Since the resignation of the Membership Development Coordinator, the committee along with Kent McKusick and Cheryl Lawson of the Personnel Committee, has been meeting to re-evaluate and redefine the role of the Membership Development Coordinator. We are looking forward to hiring another MDC and hope to have this person in place in early 2019.
- We have scheduled the next membership exploration class for January 19th and have three more planned with dates pending.

Contact: nominating@uufames.org

Mission: Nominating Committee’s mission and structure is determined by the UUFA bylaws. “The Nominating Committee presents a slate of candidates for officers, Board members, and one new Nominating Committee member at the annual meeting. The committee will announce its selections at least two weeks prior to the annual meeting.”

Meeting time for 2019: To be determined (generally August-October)

Report Submitted by: Cindy Scholten


2018 Review:
We convened in June of 2018 after the committee chair and office administrator reviewed the job descriptions of the board. The president, vice-president, secretary/treasurer, and at large board member job descriptions were updated reflecting the 2017 by-law changes and current responsibilities.

We met three times and also used e-mails for communication among members. Our first task was identifying potential board members. A board visit in June provided a list of potential candidates in addition to those
identified by the NC. Contacts were made by phone, e-mail, and preferably personally.

The NC considered over thirty-five members for these leadership positions. As in the past we looked for reliability, current engagement at the UUFA, enthusiasm to move the congregation forward, good group and people skills, under 50 (difficult to do), creative thinker, problem solver, open mindedness, good listening skills, and a familiarity with financial and budgetary issues. We were also tasked with finding male representation, since three men were leaving the board.

Keeping the office administrator in the loop was vital to the success of the committee. Bradley provided information from the Executive Leadership Team and the Religious Education Coordinator.

On October 1, the slate of names for the 2018 annual meeting was submitted to the Board of Directors.

President – Melissa Niesen
Vice-president – Sarah Carlson
Secretary-Treasurer (2019-2020) – Chris McClure
At large Board member (2019-2020) – Sue Koehrsen (second term)
At large Board member (2019-2020) – Dennis Dake
Nominating committee (2019-2021) – Jamie Gurganus
Endowment Acquisitions & Disbursements Committee (2019-2023) –
Jonathan Fox

(Molly Helmers and Angie Poole will continue in their at large positions until the end of 2019.)

The committee feels the future of a vibrant congregation depends on recruiting younger members to the board, as well as developing leadership skills in potential candidates.

FROM THE FINANCE CLUSTER

Committees that oversee the financial health and planning of the congregation.

ENDOWMENT ACQUISITIONS & DISBURSEMENTS COMMITTEE

Contact: endowment@uufames.org

Mission: The Endowment Fund Acquisition and Disbursement Committee shall cultivate, solicit, and steward gifts and bequests from all possible sources consistent with the Endowment Acquisition and Disbursement policies and procedures. This committee shall make a diligent effort to develop and carry out programs for acquisition purposes. Such solicitation shall not be
conducted in competition or conflict with the regular pledge programs of the Fellowship.

**Meeting time for 2019:** as needed, semi-annually with Endowment Fund Investment Committee

**Report Submitted by:** Bradley Duckstein, congregational administrator

**Committee Members:** Cheryl Lawson (2015-2019), Lisa Larson (2016-2020)

**2018 Review:**
- The Board accepted resignations of three committee members, one due to resignation of Fellowship membership and two by request (UUFA membership still maintained). This leaves openings (after 2019 congregational elections) in the 2017-2021 term position and 2018-2022 term position.

**Looking Ahead to 2019:**
- Fill empty committee positions or pursue committee restructuring with Endowment Fund Investment Committee (and subsequent bylaw changes).
- Work with Endowment Fund Investment Committee to increase activity of new contributions to the fund and identify proper projects at the UUFA for use of Endowment funds.

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**ENDOWMENT FUND INVESTMENT COMMITTEE**

**Contact:** investments@uufames.org

**Mission:** To accept, invest and manage the resources of the UUFA Endowment Fund, consistent with UUFA investment policies, to transfer funds to be disbursed and to report the fund status to the Board and congregation.

**Meeting Time for 2019:** As required - at least twice per year

**Committee Members:** Dave Fox (chair; 2016-2019), Larry Koehrsen (2016-2021), Stu Huntington (2016-2023)

**Report Submitted by:** Dave Fox

**2018 Accomplishments:**
No major actions were experienced. Normal action of receiving some contributions and disbursing Funds as requested and required. Meetings with the fund financial consultant were held to review and approve various investment strategies.

**Looking Ahead to 2019:**
Goals for 2019 include working better with the Endowment A&D committee to increase activity of new contributions to the fund and identifying proper projects at the UUFA for use of Endowment funds as expected in the Enabling Documents.
Additional Comments:
Investments have recently taken a significant decline due to overall market conditions. The situation will be observed and appropriate action taken, as appropriate. There will be an annual financial report prepared after year end data is available. Expect that summary of all accounts to be available for review by mid-February. Total Endowment value as of October 31, including both unrestricted and restricted funds, is $361,015.54.

Contact: finance@uufames.org

Mission: The Finance Committee is responsible for developing the annual budget and auditing the Fellowship financial records. The Treasurer is responsible for the receipt, recording, care, and spending of all fellowship funds, as provided in Article VI, Section 5 of the Bylaws. The Finance Committee works along with the Congregational Administrator and Projects Coordinator to support the Treasurer and to coordinate communication among committees (particularly Stewardship, Membership, Endowment Investment, Endowment Acquisitions and Disbursements, and Personnel), the Board of Directors, and the members of the congregation.

Meeting Time for 2019: As needed. Next meeting scheduled for approximately February 15th, 2019.

Committee Members: Chris McClure (chair), Barb Abbott, Stephanie Fox, Dave Sly, Dave Fox (ex-officio)

Report Submitted by: Chris McClure

2018 Accomplishments:
• Monitored execution of 2018 budget so as to not run a deficit but still fund requests and requirements.
• Developed 2019 budget, working with Stewardship, Personnel, Endowment, and other committees and Congregational Administrator to do so.

Looking Ahead to 2019:
• Funding the purchase of multiple Solar Shares from City of Ames.
• Execution of 2019 budget so as to fund requirements and requests so as to be deficit neutral.
• Identify any looming capital improvements (building, grounds, technology, etc.) and formulate funding strategies for them (fundraising, savings, endowments, etc.)

In looking beyond 2019, our largest budget factor is personnel expense. Larger congregational conversations are needed on staffing needs and model, and the implications of such. What are the benefits of having paid employees versus having volunteer members fill the roles?
PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Contact: personnel@uufames.org

Mission: The Personnel Committee provides support to the UUFA minister and staff in the implementation of the UUFA employment policies and practices. The committee also acts in an advisory capacity on personnel matters for the Fellowship Board.

Meeting Time for 2019: As needed

Committee Members: Cheryl Lawson (chair), Bert Schroeder, David Sly

Report Submitted by: Cheryl Lawson

2018 Accomplishments:
• Hired a Member Development Coordinator to welcome visitors and work in the office on accounts receivable.
• Accepted the resignation of the Member Development Coordinator and worked with the minister and membership committee to revise the job description to focus on membership duties. We are currently in a job search for this position.
• Assisted with the evaluation of Rev. Kent McKusick and presented the results to the UUFA Board.
• Submitted a staff budget for board approval.

Looking Ahead to 2019:
• Submit a revised Employee Handbook for UUFA Board approval.

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

Contact: stewardship@uufames.org

Mission: The mission of the Stewardship Committee is to nurture a culture of generosity within the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ames. Stewardship includes sharing a portion of all of our resources, including time, talent, and treasure.

Meeting time for 2018: TBD

Report Submitted by: Executive Leadership Team (Ben Woline, Melissa Niesen, Sam Wormley, Rev. Kent McKusick)

Committee Members: Fritz Keinert (chair), Chris Poole, Mary Richards

The Executive Leadership Team would like to thank Fritz Keinert, Mary Richards, and Chris Poole for their devotion to the stewardship efforts of this community, and for coordinating this year’s pledge campaign.
Through the new Generosity Team, we are in the process of embracing a new culture of stewardship that includes past, present, and future Fellowship leaders, and more deeply involves our congregation’s members.

We invite you to reserve February 8-10, 2019 on your calendar for a weekend of exploring stewardship with Mark Ewert, consultant from Stewardship for Us. We are excited by the opportunity to engage in deepening our connection to this community through stewardship. Please plan to join us!

FROM THE OUTREACH CLUSTER

Committees whose missions support congregational commitments to community and international connections.

PARTNER CHURCH COMMITTEE

Contact: partnerchurch@uufames.org

Mission: The Partner Church Committee takes the lead in coordinating and facilitating our partnership with the congregation of Tordátfalva, Romania.

Meeting Time for 2019: TBD; as needed for projects

Committee Members: Brian & Lisa Eslinger, Kitty Fisher (chair), Sue Hegland & Tom Andre, Fritz Keinert, Joan Mathews, Chris McClure, Ginny & Lee Molgaard, Melissa Niesen, Kay Puttack, Mary Richards, Amy Slagell, Brenda & Mark Witherspoon

Report Submitted by: Kitty Fisher

2018 Accomplishments:
- Continued paid membership in UU Partner Church Council (UUPCC)
- Disbursed funds designated in 2018 UUFA Budget for Partner Church
- Organized a Fellowship Potluck on Easter, April 1, 2018, to celebrate our partnership
- Worked with John Dale, UUPCC Travel Coordinator, to create itinerary and travel plans for UUFA group tour to Transylvania. Unfortunately, due to an insufficient number of travelers and other complications, we had to postpone the trip until 2019.
- Our partner church minister, Lorinczi Lajos, was keenly disappointed that our Fellowship wasn’t making a trip, so Rev. Kent McKusick, minister, decided to join a UUPCC tour in September to visit our partner congregation and to experience Thanksgiving in Transylvania and the activities honoring the 450th anniversary of the Edict of Torda. He hand carried and presented a quilt made by UUFA Religious Education children
as a gift to the Tordalva congregation. Since his return he has presented photos and highlights of his experiences in several Sunday programs. He carried back a precious gift from Tordalva to us in Ames - a hand-carved kopjafa (memorial post) commemorating the 450th anniversary of the Edict of Torda. It is a beautiful visible reminder of our partnership, and plans are being made for its installation in Fellowship Hall.

- On November 18, the Partner Church Committee assisted Kent in presenting a Sunday service in a reciprocal Thanksgiving program honoring our partnership and including a grape and bread communion.

Looking Ahead to 2019:
- Continue active membership in UU Partner Church Council
- Disburse budgeted allocation to the Partner Church
- Consider organizing another Easter potluck and raising additional funds to support Tordalva.
- Schedule adult education offerings to view the UU history series that features information on Unitarianism in Transylvania.
- Apply to participate in a ReFresh weekend through UUPCC: a weekend of discussions and activities with UUPCC personnel to reflect on and reinvigorate partnership
- In light of Kent’s sabbatical in 2019, determine when it would be feasible to make a congregational trip to Transylvania (2019? 2020?) and develop a group of enthusiastic, interested people for such a trip.

SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

Contact: socialjustice@uufames.org

Mission: The Social Justice Committee studies social justice issues in our community and world, informs Fellowship members about social justice issues and actions, and encourages UUFA members to be active in making social justice happen.

Meeting time for 2019: The committee schedule is under review and will be announced later. It is anticipated that the full committee will meet quarterly and that “subcommittees”/“interest groups” will meet more frequently.

Report Submitted by: Tom Andre, chair

2018 Accomplishments:
- Identified monthly offertory split recipients
- Worked on mental health issues, supported A Mid-Iowa Organizing Strategy (AMOS) in a mental health advocacy effort with Mary Greeley and Story County Board of Supervisors.
- Met with the Ames AMOS cohort and overall AMOS house meetings, contributing to efforts in affordable housing, job/people/personal skills training for un/under-employed individuals (bringing Project Iowa to
Ames), participated in the AMOS taxation educational house meeting. Encouraged UUFA members to attend AMOS events

- Worked with Inclusive Ames and Ames Youth and School Action Team to promote more inclusivity and reductions in racial/ethnic disparities in achievement and school discipline
- Supported local efforts related to rights/support for immigration, undocumented immigrants, and DACA (Dreamer individuals).
- Conducted letter writing and petition efforts at Sunday services to national and state legislators about many social justice issues.
- Recommended to the Board that the UUFAmes consider joining the IUU Witness / Advocacy Network (IUUWAN) and encouraged UUFAmes members to consider membership in IUUWAN through announcements in the newsletter.
- Co-supported the AMES March for Peace on Apr. 29 in which several Ames congregations participated and encouraged UUFAmes members to participate. This was part of a nationwide effort.
- Emailed agendas and minutes to the Social Justice Committee members and to UUFA members who indicated in 2017 that they wished to receive them.
- Encouraged members to participate in the Islamic Center of Ames in Collaboration with the American Iftar Dinner
- Discussed and supported the Class Consciousness workshop recommendations
- Sponsored the Women Sharing Support workshop, facilitated by Suzanne Zilber, and approved some committee funding to support security.
- Supported the Solar Farm effort and recommended it to the board
- Supported the Rise to Climate event of the Climate Solutions Circle and recommended use of some committee funding to support it.

2018 Offertory Split Recipients
- January - Mid-Iowa Community Action (heating assistance) - $500.38
- February - Mid-Iowa Community Action (food assistance) - $222.00
- March - Ames High School H.O.P.E. and Middle School food pantry - $312.26
- April - NAMI-Cl - $577.30
- May - Story County Community Housing Corporation - $329.15
- June - Bethesda Community Food Pantry - $222.50
- July - Food at First - $236.68
- August - Boys & Girls Club of Story County - $276.00
- September - St. Mary’s Hispanic Ministry (Marshalltown tornado relief) - $569.45
- October - Maria Fund (Puerto Rican hurricane relief) - $479.24
- November - Habitat for Humanity of Central Iowa - $405.00
- December - SunSmart Ames
- TOTAL GIVEN (January-November): $4,129.96
Looking Ahead to 2019:
• Revision of the Committee Meeting Plan as per November minutes. Continued support of activities/efforts above and other relevant social justice issues that emerge.

FROM THE PROGRAM CLUSTER

Committees whose missions support and oversee the programming and education efforts of the congregation.

ART EXHIBITION COMMITTEE

Contact: art@uufames.org

Mission: The goal of the Art Exhibition Committee of the UUFA is to exhibit spiritually enriching art work that supports the creative process in us all. The art exhibition area of the Fellowship building, known as the Gallery in the Round, has a dual role as a continuing aesthetic and artistic enrichment to the practice of ethical and liberal religious ideals within the UUFA and as a community-based professional art gallery.

The Art Exhibition Committee supports and encourages freedom of expression in all its activities. Issues of diversity, individuality, complexity, inventiveness, artistic quality, and the presentation of ideas and issues are considered in the selection of the exhibition program.

The Committee welcomes the open discussion of issues and ideas raised by the exhibited art works (and the artistic processes employed in their creation).

Meeting time for 2019: As needed

Report Submitted by: Bradley Duckstein, Congregational Administrator

Committee Members: Bob Anders, Dennis Dake (chair), Rilla Fox, Stu Huntington, Kerry Martens, Chris Martin

2018 Exhibits:
• December 2, 2017-January 27, 2018: Iowa: A Place by Kristen Greteman
• January 27, 2018-March 24, 2018: Works by Art Staniforth
• March 24, 2018-May 18, 2018: Left/Over Objects by Tina Rice
• May 19, 2018-July 14, 2018: Seeing Stories by Joe Geha
• July 14, 2018-September 1, 2018: Boxed Words by Kathy Svec
• September 1, 2018-October 27, 2018: A Quest for Harmony by Fred Vallier
• October 27, 2018-December 22, 2018: Intent. Invent. Print. by David Brown
Contact: recommitte@uufames.org

Mission: The Religious Education (RE) Committee works with the religious education staff to nurture and educate our children and youth.

Meeting Time for 2019: Monthly, Tuesdays at 6:00 pm (exact week TBD)


Report Submitted by: Tigon Woline

2018 Accomplishments:
- Starting in spring 2018, Flame Keepers began lighting the chalice on Sunday mornings
- RE-led service demonstrated what the youth had learned through the year
- It’s Okay with Me Dance had approximately 40 youth participate and raised $86 for the Trevor Project
- Record number of participants in Secret Friends program. In February, 150 books were donated to Ames elementary school weekend food bags
- First Youth and Family Intern for the spring and summer
- Summer Camp, July: between 24-36 youth participated during the weeks’ activities
- Fellowship Family Nights began meeting in June, continuing through present
- Hosted first Safety Day training in August. RE teachers and others from the congregation were able to participate in several different sessions.
- Record number of RE students participated in RE kick-off day in September
- Children’s Choir began in Fall 2018
- Trick or Treat for UNICEF raised $210 (October)

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<td>Gr. 3-5</td>
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<td>Gr. 6-8</td>
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<td>Soul Matters for Kids Large Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fellowship Family Night (Wednesdays)</td>
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Looking Ahead to 2019:
- Transition to a new RE Coordinator
- Continue a Youth and Family Internship position
- Maintaining the interest and momentum in the RE program
- Strengthen the connection for the high school youth group
- Maintain the program offerings throughout the year

Additional Comments:
This year the RE program as gained tremendous momentum. Youth of all ages are actively participating in programs and activities. New programs and activities that we have offered throughout the year have been received well and have had high participation rates. We hope that next year we will be able to continue this momentum through our time of transition and continue to offer amazing programs for our youth and families.

SUNDAY SERVICE COMMITTEE

Contact: sundayprograms@uufames.org

Mission: The Sunday Service Committee (SSC) supports the minister’s responsibility for Sunday morning services.

Sunday morning services are the most visible manifestation of the ministry of the UUFA. This committee embodies our Fellowship’s tradition of shared ministry. Specifically, the SSC aims to realize the congregation’s commitment to being “a beacon of social justice and liberal religion” by providing collaborators, facilitators, ideas, and feedback to support the minister’s Sunday services and by planning, shepherding, and implementing services when our minister is not in the pulpit.

Meeting Time for 2019: Second Saturday of each month, 10:00-11:30

Committee Members: Karen Bates (co-chair), Sarah Carlson, Jan Cook, Peggy Earnshaw, Kitty Fisher, Ralph Gandy, Dan Haug, Catherine Huisman, Nichole Ose, Jane Runneals, Amy Slagell (co-chair), Mark Witherspoon

Report Submitted by: Amy Slagell

2018 Accomplishments:
- Supported the minister’s responsibility for the 52 Sunday Services in 2018. During the past year members of the committee provided leadership in organizing or speaking for 22 services when our minister was not in the pulpit.
- Supported the continued implementation of thematic ministry using materials from Soul Matters.
• Proposed and drafted a policy to guide decision making and communication processes in the event of the need to cancel a service due to inclement weather or other emergency.

• Welcomed several new committee members this year and worked to onboard new members through written how-to materials, devoting meeting time to reviewing policies and procedures, and mentoring new members by partnering new and experienced shepherds for services to work together on service planning.

• At monthly meetings committee members discuss ideas and resources for Sunday services, share input received from members of the congregation and reflect on recent services with an eye toward identifying best practices and ways to improve.

Looking Ahead to 2019:
The SSC will work hard so that during the upcoming sabbatical of our minister, the Sunday Services at the UUFA will support the congregation in its mission of Growing spiritually. Creating community. Striving for justice. Learning to love. We will work with each other, with visiting ministers and the congregation in ways that will help the UUFA accomplish its intention of meeting the variety of spiritual needs and worship style preferences represented in our fellowship.