

# UU NEWS

NORTHEAST IOWA UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP

APRIL, MAY, JUNE 2008



10:00 a.m. Coffee Hour  
10:30 a.m. SERVICE BEGINS

Historic Bethania Lutheran Church  
113 N Mill Street  
(across Mill Street from the Vesterheim Museum)  
Decorah, Iowa 52101  
[www.neiuuf.org](http://www.neiuuf.org)  
email: [contact@neiuuf.org](mailto:contact@neiuuf.org)  
phone: Sue Otte 563.382.3137

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## SUNDAY MORNINGS AT THE UU FELLOWSHIP . . .

What a year we've had! We have celebrated our connection to the natural world with seasonal services: Fall Ingathering, Day of the Dead/ All Souls, Spring Equinox/Easter, Earth Day (and Summer Solstice coming in June). We have given more time to practicing silence, with quarterly meditative services. Because we want to know more about the decision making process, we have struggled with ethical questions in the fields of genetics, leadership, and food and farming.

Speakers have helped us think about the importance of wilderness, forgiveness, family, balance, and time in our lives. Continuing a beloved tradition, we've heard frequently from our own members about their life stories. And our youth have shown us that they are quite capable of growing into our future leaders. With music, poetry, humor, ritual, and reverence, we have honored this year in the life of our community. We hope your life is richer too.

Spend some of your summer with UU friends.....We're planning a Summer Solstice Sunday Celebration on June 22, and a few outdoor services over the warmer months. Watch e-mails for details. And when you're on the road traveling, don't forget to visit UU congregations along the way. *Sue Otte*

**OUR  
UU  
STARS!**

★ Beth Wahlberg and Lou Hall (aka Thelma and Louise) joined fellow Prairie Star UUs at the annual district conference April 11-13 in Omaha, Nebraska. *Rebuilding a Faithful Democracy* was the theme. Beth and Lou will be sharing with us some of what they learned and heard during one of our Sunday services. Thanks for attending and representing the NIEUUF Beth and Lou!



# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## Best Wishes to Derek & Kathleen Sweet

The board of trustees of the NEIUUF would like to warmly thank Derek and Kathleen Sweet for having been part of our fellowship. Kathleen and Derek feel their spiritual journey is taking them in a new direction and have asked to be removed from the membership list. In their letter of resignation they write, "please know that we wish to be recognized as friends of the fellowship and will, without question, attend now and again. We love our UU acquaintances but find ourselves drawn down another branch of the spiritual path."

The fellowship has been better because of them, their warmth, insight and leadership. We wish Derek, Kathleen and Gareth all the best. They will be missed.

## Corrections for the NEIUUF Directories:

### Kristen Albertson & Tim Hayes

382-0025  
1383 Coon Creek Road  
Decorah IA 52101  
kristim@oneota.net  
Children: Lydia, Gus, Arlo

**Priscilla Kepfield's phone is 380-7111**

**Dick Janson's zip code is 52132**

If you need a directory, contact Lou Hall at 563.735.5311 or email her at lahall77@hotmail.com.

Directories are also available at Sunday Services every week.

cut out and place in your UU directory

Yet another  
great UU  
family!

The  
Eichingers!



Mark, Isaak, and Michelle

Visit often:

[www.uua.org](http://www.uua.org)  
[www.neiuuf.org](http://www.neiuuf.org)  
[www.psdoua.org](http://www.psdoua.org)

## Newsletter Submissions Policy:

It is the policy of the NEIUUF that anonymous letters and correspondence will not be published in our newsletter or other publications. If a member has a concern and wishes to bring it before the board, they may request that it remain confidential, but only signed letters will be given consideration. In order to address concerns of members, elected officials and leaders need to document situations and come to conclusions based on fact. This often requires further clarification and conversation with the person bringing forward the complaint or concern.

# MEMBERSHIP

## Membership Committee Report:

Membership is the lifeblood of any fellowship. NEIUUF membership has increased by 8% since this time last year and 37% above that of two years ago. We now have 56 members, an increase of four since 2007. We currently have 41 membership family units, one more than that of the previous year. Since March of 2007, we have welcomed eight new members. In addition, NEIUUF serves as a fellowship for children of all ages, pre-school through high school, who are active in the educational program.

Membership efforts continue on a number of fronts. In conjunction with the Publicity Committee, membership efforts are enhanced by consistent communications about the fellowship to current members and the larger community. This endeavor includes news dissemination, advertising, newsletters and postings on [neiuuf.org](http://neiuuf.org), the thrust of which is to alert non-members of our presence and format as well as to keep current members informed and feeling a part of a higher profile organization.

Additionally, membership packets are prepared and distributed to prospective and new members. These contain the congregation's DVD *Journeys*, produced in 2006, along with materials on the foundation principles of Unitarian Universalism and a visitor form. Greeters meet the congregation before each service and hand out cards to visitors. Visitors can fill these out and note if they are interested in being contacted for more information about the fellowship.

## Looking ahead . . .

1. A carryover goal from last year is the need to have more occasions for the congregation to get together outside of the normal service for fun and to establish deeper connections with one another.
2. This past fall the membership committee invited Bruce Jordan to share some of the membership initiatives that were successful in his former UU congregation in Rochester, Minnesota. We would like to focus on one or two of these ideas and implement them in the coming year.
3. The membership committee feels it is more important than ever to meet with other committees and see how we can proceed with common purpose in building the membership base and attracting more visitors, who will become the members of tomorrow.
4. The membership committee would like to work on further refining the hospitality program which is important to both member retention and recruitment.
5. Finally, we would like to develop a new program, probably in conjunction with another committee(s), that is unique to the NEIUUF. This event or project would telegraph to the community, by its nature, an important principle or characteristic of our fellowship. The goal would be to compel interested persons to participate and investigate the congregation more fully.

*Submitted by John Hall*

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# MEMBERSHIP, cont'

## COFFEE WITH LOU!

*Lou Hall interviews a different member of the fellowship for each newsletter. This time she interviewed the lovely Priscilla Kepfield.*



**Lou:** Do you take cream in your coffee?

**Priscilla:** I'll just take the cream, please, coffee has been crossed of my list of legal stimulants. Fair Trade Chocolate is another matter entirely.

**Lou:** In the UUA video, *Voices of a Liberal Faith* (check it out at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=wezp1W2HKIU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wezp1W2HKIU)) a member speaks about doing the work it takes to understand what our belief is. What does this mean to you personally?

**Priscilla:** For me Unitarian Universalism is the umbrella sheltering the unique beliefs of its members, and I feel free to explore, enlarge and speak of my beliefs openly in this setting. I once referred to myself as a "Closet Unitarian" as I sat in other pews where my thoughts were neither welcome nor acceptable, so I did not speak. It was incredibly hard, try as I might, to fit into what I shall call 'mainstream denominations'. I find it incredibly easy to fit under the UU umbrella, and perhaps it is a character flaw but I simply don't worry about understanding UU beliefs. I am happy if I understand my own - occasionally. In college one of my majors was philosophy and just look where it got me.

**Lou:** It is my opinion that although we've addressed social justice issues and have given generously to social justice causes locally, we are lacking the relationship part of that service. What do you think we could be doing in the future to demonstrate a larger public role?

**Priscilla:** I had a very good idea about this before I forgot it! I think the Fellowship has done well in an abstract sense, and members are individually active as in the Burning Bright and Earth Day concerts for example, but I can't sing. I think of our Fellowship as a green group or cool congregation and I'd like us to expand on that concept. Green burials are worth exploring, just one of many ways to act locally. I guess what I am trying to say is I'd like to see us work on green projects together, young and old a like.

**Lou:** Would you share your scone recipe?

**Priscilla:** If I share my scone recipe what will I bring to potlucks and coffees?



# HOSPITALITY SCHEDULE

DATE	SNACKS & CLEAN UP	GREETER
April 27	Tom Wahlberg/Janelle Pavlovec	Beth Wahlberg
May 4	Mark Eichinger/Parker Deen	Michelle Eichinger
May 11	Mary Beth Gallant/Markus Burggraf	Carol Hagen
May 18	Mike Vermace/Brenda Burke	Shirley Vermace
May 25	Amy Chicos/Harvery Benson	Lane Schwartz
June 1	Barrett Kepfield/Mona Quinn	Nancy Barry
June 8	Peter Jorgenson/Mary Jorgenson	Dale Tregoning
June 15	_____ / Ardith Hoff	Daryl Hoff
June 22	Jenna Haug/Elyse Hawthorn	Dick Janson
June 30	Those Darling Darlings!	Laura Beard

**PLEASE LOOK AT THIS SCHEDULE CLOSELY and MARK YOUR CALENDARS ACCORDINGLY.** Remember, if you cannot work on the days you have been assigned, find a replacement! You can always check with Betsy Pierce at 382-5274 if you are not sure when you are scheduled. Put this on the inside of your cupboard door as a reminder!

Check with the previous weeks volunteers to see if you need to pick up more coffee, creamer, napkins, etc. It varies from week to week. **YOU NEED TO BRING YOUR OWN DISH TOWELS and DISH RAGS! All tables, dishes, countertops need to be wiped clean. All garbage needs to be taken home and disposed of by you. Return all UU supplies back to the storage closet under the stairs. Be sure to sweep the floors!**

**FYI** - This sheet of information is also posted permanently on the inside cupboard door in the Bethania kitchen!

# HOSPITALITY DETAILS

## Snacks:

Please bring enough snacks to serve at least 50-60 people. Suggestions include: coffee cakes, bars, apple slices, cheese/crackers, muffins, pastries, cookies, fresh fruit. You also need to provide juice options, we usually go through about 1/2 gallon of juice.

## Coffee and Tea:

Check ahead of time to see if there is enough coffee and tea either by calling last week's volunteers or making arrangements with Vesterheim to get in the kitchen during the week and check. Or you can just bring some from home just in case and take it back home if it wasn't needed.

Make at least three pots of coffee, put them in carafes and then be prepared to make one more pot. First batch of coffee should be ready by 9:50a.m. Use the coffee maker marked for the UU on the countertop. The coffee bag/box/supplies are located in the UU storage closet under the stairs. There should be ground coffee, filters, sugar, napkins, and coffee filters in that bag. You may use the Vesterheim coffee mugs, located in the cupboard below the snack counter, but they must all be washed and put back away when finished that morning.

Tea water is boiled in a pan on the stove and then transferred to a carafe, located in the "carafe" cupboard in the kitchen. Selection of tea bags in the UU tea/coffee bag.

## Greeter:

The greeter should arrive by 9:45 a.m. and be wearing their nametag. Greet everyone that attends the services. Make a special effort to welcome and guide any new visitors to the coffee hour in the basement. There are white "visitor" cards in the supplies upstairs, you should hand one of those to new visitors as well.

### If any supplies are low, please notify:

Betsy Peirce at 382-5274 or b\_peirce17@yahoo.com

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# BOARD NOTES

## NEIUUF Board of Directors 2007-2008

### Officers:

Chair - Ruth Jenkins  
Chair-elect - John Hall  
Treasurer - Beth Wahlberg  
Secretary - Shirley Vermace

### General trustees:

Derek Sweet  
Darrel/Ardith Hoff  
Carolyn Corbin  
Ex-officio - Dennis Darling

## 2008-2009 Board Nominations:

### Officers:

Chair - John Hall  
Chair-elect - Nancy Barry  
Treasurer - Beth Wahlberg  
Secretary - Bruce Jordan

### General trustees:

Cathy Rawitt  
Pat Brockett  
Carolyn Corbin/Janelle Pavlovec  
Ruth Jenkins - ex-officio

These members will be voted on at the UU annual meeting May 4th. Please attend the annual meeting!

The NEIUUF Board of Trustees meets the first Tuesday of every month.  
You are always welcome.

To know exact time and location of the meeting call or email **Chair Ruth Jenkins** (382-5609) [jenkinru@luther.edu](mailto:jenkinru@luther.edu) or **Chair-elect John Hall** (735-5311) [chimrock@mabeltel.com](mailto:chimrock@mabeltel.com)

### **COMMITTEE VOLUNTEERS!**

The NEIUUF board of trustees and the nominations committee will be working together to find volunteers to serve on the many committees that make this fellowship run smoothly. Please be thinking about your special talents and how best to apply them to the NEIUUF! If you have not yet been contacted and you want to serve on a specific committee, please be sure to let a board member know your wishes and also be sure to fill out the membership renewal form on the back of your pledge form.

## **BUDGET UPDATE**

**2007-2008 Pledges: \$18,200**

**Offerings July - April: \$14,986**

(our fiscal year runs July-June)

We're right on track - close to 82% of pledge at a little over 3/4 of the year! Of course, this figure for offerings received July-April also includes donations from non-members. If you have any questions about your progress toward your 2007-2008 pledge, please contact:  
Beth Wahlberg at 382-3798 or [wahlbergs@netins.net](mailto:wahlbergs@netins.net).

**Thanks for your support everyone!**

# BOARD NOTES cont'

## Social Concerns Committee:

This fiscal year our fellowship of just 54 members was able to donate \$2000 to area charitable organizations.

- \$500 Decorah Area Food Pantry**
- \$500 Free Medical Clinic**
- \$500 Heating Assistance Program**
- \$500 Helping Services for NE Iowa**

In addition to these gifts, various members performed acts of charity throughout the year - Darrel Hoff is on the board of the Greater Area Pantry in Calmar, Betsy Peirce and Bruce Jordan have been active with the Oneota Food Coop to give just a couple of examples. All of our members serve the community in some way with their volunteer time and energy.

*Submitted by:  
Darrel Hoff, acting committee chair*

Childcare is available  
at all NEIUUF  
Sunday Services

## *A note from the chair ...*

I was sweeping my kitchen floor for the umpteenth time yesterday and caught myself grinning about it. I realized how present I was at that moment. I was grinning at the dirt because it represented the many feet passing through my kitchen. I was grinning at the blessings of having family and friends (and pets) in my house. I had a feeling of complete happiness and awe.

Staying present is not always easy. We have to plan ahead and part of planning is always based on past practices/issues/concerns. We lament over "should haves" or "could haves" and we worry about what will happen "if"...even though the "if" seldom happens. We have been conditioned to look ahead and many of us carry regrets and past decisions like gunnysacks tied to our sides. It is really tiresome carrying around all of that stuff.

I challenge all of us to stay present. Appreciate all that we do have and all that we have accomplished. Staying present is such a blessing. (I hope you all can be 'present' at our UU annual meeting May 4!)

Peace,

*Ruth Jenkins*



A great big **THANK YOU** to the wonderful UU students for an enjoyable childrens' service a few weeks ago! And also a special **THANK YOU** to all of the Religious Education instructors: Brita Carbonell, Michelle Eichinger, Kristin Albertson, Beth Wahlberg, Lor Miller, Paul Docken, Simon Hanson, and Becky Idstrom.