
NUUSLETTER

NORTHWOODS UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP

A Beacon of Light in the Northwoods

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Volume 4, Number 8

November 5,

2001 Coming Sundays

Taking the Pulpit

Sunday, 10 AM, November 11, All-Fellowship Meeting to discuss the appointment of a part-time minister.

Sunday, 10 AM, November 18, Guest at your Table Program.

Sunday, 10 AM, December 2, Tim Kratz. **Sunday**, Evening Program, December 16, Rev Sydney Morris.

Sunday, 10 AM, December 30,

Sunday, 10 AM, January 13, Bob Kovar

Sunday, 10 AM, January 27, Rev Sydney Morris,

Sunday, 10 AM, February 10,

Sunday, 10 AM, February 24, ▪

Adult Religious Education

On alternate Sundays at 10:30 AM, when we do not have services, we discuss topics relating religious and ethical issues to current events and/or we discuss issues of spirit and meaning to our group. Starting November 25th we will discuss Karen Armstrong's book, Islam, a short history. The book is available from <http://shop.barnesandnoble.com> for \$12—Terry Hoyt has six copies to sell. We will also view 'Islam: Empire of Faith' a recent PBS-TV special. ▪

Note from the President

Although many were present at the All-Fellowship meeting on October 13, some were unable to attend and it is important to communicate to the entire Fellowship what we decided at that meeting. So, I want to use this column to do just that.

We had what can be described only as an extraordinary meeting of the Fellowship on

October 13. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the next steps in the future of our Fellowship, in particular whether we should expand the building and/or consider calling a part-time minister. Twenty-six members attended.

We had a talking circle in which most people expressed the opinion that they would rather have a part-time minister than an expanded building. People also expressed concern about the financial burden this would impose. By the time the talking circle ended there was genuine enthusiasm for pursuing the idea of a part-time minister. A several step action plan was proposed that called for the appointment of an ad-hoc committee to draw up the parameters of what a part-time minister's duties might be (essentially a job description). We would then convene another all-fellowship meeting (now scheduled for Sunday, November 11 at 10:00 AM) to discuss and refine these parameters and, if agreed at that meeting, we would plan a special pledge canvass to see how much financial support there would be to fund a part-time minister position. We had a secret ballot vote on this action plan and it passed 23 to 0 with 1 abstention (two members left the meeting prior to the vote).

The committee appointed to draft the position parameters consists of Joyce Barnes, Irma Braunstein, Candace Zahn Cain, Doris Eberlein, Terry Hoyt (chair), Tim Kratz (ex officio), and Diane Reupert. This committee has now met three times and a report from Terry Hoyt on the committee's findings are elsewhere in this newsletter. (See pages 2-4)

My personal sense of the October 13 meeting was that there was a passion for the idea of a part-time minister that was lacking for the notion of a building expansion. We need to explore the source of this passion and the need it represents. The next opportunity to do this is the All-Fellowship meeting on November 11. I look forward to seeing all of you there, but if you can't attend, please share your thoughts with me, members of the board, or members of the ad-hoc committee.

Peace. Tim Kratz ▪

Joys & Concerns

In the Mukwanago UU Newsletter, Rev. Annie Homes writes, "I urge each of you in the coming weeks to seek peace in your hearts, your families, your neighborhoods, your work places. Peace is a like the ripple effect of a stone on the water, it too like violence has the power to send effects to places far from the origin. May we remember that those who perpetuated these acts are also people. Our first principle reminds us that we are a church that values the inherent worth and dignity of every human person, even those who have done us harm. That needs to be our prayer as we talk about these things with others, our children, ourselves. Burn candles for peace, take a moment to envision peace each morning before you go about your daily duty. Remember that as it only takes one to foster violence, it may only take one to begin the journey to peace. Peace be with you in these challenging and tough times that we are facing as individuals and as a nation." ▪

We pray for the speedy recovery of Kim Norris from her recent encounter with bad dog. ▪

Announcements

Central Midwest District UU Women's Federation, Fall Retreat, at Lake Geneva. November 9-11. Registration deadline has past. If you still want to go, try calling Betty Jacchim 708.784.0742, bj.mail@att.net or Ellen Wehrle 708.848.3015, ewehrle@aol.com.

We will have an All-Fellowship meeting on Sunday November 11, 2001 at 10:00 AM at the Fellowship Building to discuss the recommended duties and the financial implications of having a part-time minister. ▪

Minutes of Meeting: 10-18-2001

Meeting was held at the Braunstein residence with the following in attendance: Irma Braunstein, Joyce Barnes, Terry Hoyt, Diane Reupert, Candace Zahn Cain, Doris Eberlein, and Tim Kratz, ex officio member as Board President. Terry Hoyt was selected Committee Chairman.

A discussion of the charge of the committee ensued. It was agreed that the time frame given the committee was too short and that more thought would be required in accomplishing the understood goal of: "Working out the parameters of what a part-time minister would do." Because the committee understood that the Fellowship members who participated in the October 13th talking circle were exploring the idea of asking Rev. Sydney Morris to be our part-time minister if we chose to go ahead the committee agreed that Terry would talk with Sydney the next day to let her know that the committee felt that the process would probably need to be slowed down some to allow for proper consideration of all of the aspects of establishing a relationship with a minister. The committee agreed to meet again on Tuesday, 10-23-2001 at 6:00 P.M.

Minutes of Meeting: 10-23-2001

Meeting was held at the Braunstein residence with the following in attendance: Irma Braunstein, Joyce Barnes, Terry Hoyt, Diane Reupert, Candace Zahn Cain, Doris Eberlein, and Tim Kratz, ex officio member as Board President.

The committee discussed the procedure to be followed in accomplishing the goal of the committee. The committee decided to identify as many possible areas that a part-time minister could perform for the Fellowship, prioritize the areas in an exchange with the committee chair and then meet again prior to considering a

Fellowship meeting to discuss with members the process. It was also agreed that Irma Braunstein would investigate and report back the parameters of financing a part-time minister so that the Fellowship could more fully understand the financial commitment involved. Terry agreed to get the meetings summarized and to the committee members so that the committee would be prepared to meet at Braunstein's again on Tuesday, 10-30-2001 at 4:30 P.M.

The list of duties that might be performed by a part-time minister that should be prioritized into three groups were:

Regular Sunday services, pastoral care, counseling, musical direction, life ceremonies, office time, annual retreat, functions of the program committee, education of members (both old and new), volunteer coordinator, youth group activities, children's religious education, promotion of Fellowship growth, lead and energize social justice functions, community spokesperson, Lakeland Ministerial Committee representative.

Minutes of Meeting: 10-30-2001

Meeting was held at the Braunstein residence with the following in attendance: Irma Braunstein, Terry Hoyt, Doris Eberlein, Tim Kratz, and Diane Reupert. Terry announced that he had been contacted by Candace and that she would no longer be serving on the committee. Joyce Barnes was unable to make the meeting because of a previous commitment.

Irma reported that her investigation into the costs of a part-time minister would indicate that a 1/3-time minister would require an expenditure of around \$20,000.

There followed a discussion of what kind of services a part-time minister could provide our fellowship. The committee reached a consensus breaking things into three groups.

Group one included: Regular Sunday services (approximately 10 services), promotion of Fellowship growth, education of members, pastoral care, representative to Lakeland Ministerial Association, and life ceremonies.

Group two included: Annual retreat, office time, community spokesperson, and providing leadership for social action activities.

Group three included: Counseling, musical direction, volunteer coordinator, youth group and children's religious education.

The committee felt that the membership needed to reach a consensus regarding what they considered desirable and at what cost they were willing to

support that desire. It was agreed that the membership should get together on Sunday, November 11th to discuss the issues involved. A letter to the membership was to be sent out setting the time and date. ▀

A Ritual To Read To Each Other

(a poem read by Garrison Keillor on WXPX, 6:30 AM, 10/26/01)

If you don't know the kind of person I am and I don't know the kind of person you are a pattern that others made may prevail in the world and following the wrong god home we may miss our star.

For there is many a small betrayal in the mind, a shrug that lets the fragile sequence break sending with shouts the horrible errors of childhood storming out to play through the broken dyke.

And as elephants parade holding each elephant's tail, but if one wanders the circus won't find the park, I call it cruel and maybe the root of all cruelty to know what occurs but not recognize the fact.

And so I appeal to a voice, to something shadowy, a remote important region in all who talk: though we could fool each other, we should consider—lest the parade of our mutual life get lost in the dark.

For it is important that awake people be awake, or a breaking line may discourage them back to sleep; the signals we give—yes or no, or maybe—should be clear: the darkness around us is deep.

—William Stafford

NORTHWOODS UU FELLOWSHIP
1ST QTR REPORT ENDING 9/30/01
Ruth Erbs, Treasurer

	BUDGET	AMT TO DATE
REVENUE		
P ledging Units	24990	5425
M id year P ledges	1200	340
S unday Donations	1800	583
N ewsletter	0	12
I nterest	0	10
TOTAL	27990	6370
	=====	=====
EXPENSES		
P rogram	4500	1200
C hildrens R.E.	1140	20
A dult R.E.	400	0
M usic	450	50
SPIRITUAL GROWTH & LEARNING	6490	1270
D ues	3000	0
P ublicity	650	147
S ocial Justice	1500	200
U U Service Comm	300	0
M eeting Fund	500	0
COMM PRES & DENOM SUP	5950	347
N ewsletter	611	0
M em bership	200	0
H ospitality	200	138
L ibrary	50	0
S ocial Activities	100	0
F inance	50	0
O ffice Supplies	300	47
MEMBERSHIP GROWTH & SUP	1511	185
M ortgage	5450	1361
A dd'l Debt Reduction	1800	450
N atural Gas	700	54
E lectricity	400	84
S now P lowing	425	0
T elephone	450	98
I nsurance	405	404
M aintenance	270	71
B uilding & G rounds	2070	1221
M em orial Garden	590	198
ORGANIZ GROWTH & DEV	12560	3941
C ONTIGENCY	979	44 44
B UILDING RESERVE	500	0 0
TOTAL	27990	5787
	=====	=====

NUU Views

Question: According to the UUA webpage <http://www.uua.org/uuhs/duub/articles/jameslutheradams.html>: James Luther Adams (1901-1994) was a Unitarian parish minister, social activist, journal editor, distinguished scholar, translator and editor of major

German theologians, prolific author, and divinity school professor for more than forty years. Adams decisively shaped the minds of hundreds of students in preparation for the liberal ministry, and other scholarly professions as well. Adams was the most influential theologian among American Unitarian Universalists of the 20th century, and one of the finest 20th-century American liberal Christian theologians generally...[Adams stated that] the primary purpose of the free church is worship, which is experience of renewed loyalty to the spirit of love and all its ways. This means the church must have an explicit theology, capable of intelligent formulation in fresh, living language and forever subject to informed criticism and reform, lest it slide unawares into idolatry, which is loyalty, in actual practice, to some far less worthy reality. Adams believed that all organizations embody a theology, implicit in their assessments of legitimate and illegitimate uses of power, but careful attention to terms used in articulation of religious loyalty is not the task of other organizations, whose primary purpose is not worship. Adams insisted that the language of the liberal free church must be richly flexible, not doctrinaire. "People can die," he often said, "from hardening of the categories." He mourned the confused weakness of liberal churches whose members will not strive, in the ongoing mutual dialogue of their church, to examine and explain their own personal, central, essential loyalties. Said Adams, paraphrasing Socrates, "An unexamined faith is not worth having." How do we NUUs square with Adam's criterion? What is our explicit theology and are we striving to examine and explain ourselves individually and collectively?

Answer from Julie Wambach: The question looks long and complicated, but JLA's ideas are intertwined and they are pertinent to our recent exploration of hiring a part-time minister. I concentrate here on two of his concepts and answer the question How does NUU stack up to JLA's views on faith and power? My answer will include also the issue history which JLA combines with power.

JLA tied worship, loyalty and theology to FAITH. He defined faith as what we have confidence in, what we care enough about to offer it our love, energy and sacrifice ("A Faith for the Free").

NUU's have faith in one another and have created what JLA called a "divine community-forming power" which enfolds individuals into "a caring, trusting fellowship that protects and nourishes his or her integrity and spiritual freedom" (Faith & Freedom). Our core faith at NUU is expressed individually, rather than communally. For example, Paul Braunstein frequently proclaims, "God is Love!" Irma, an avowed atheist, would, I expect, use different words to express this NUU core faith in one another: thus, our protection of the variety of religious views among us. We believe in love and acceptance and we practice it--with one another.

Now to JLA's ideas on POWER which he relates to history: in the name of harmony, we at NUU seemed to have set aside concerns of power, and that strategy does not work.

As JLA wrote, "...retreat does not give us freedom from power. ... The power to reject or disregard power is itself an expression of power..." ("Theological Bases of Social Action").

Our neglect of power is associated with NUU members' diligent avoidance of our place in HISTORY. More precisely, NUU's place in Northwoods history: "Anything that exists effectively in history," wrote JLA, "must have form and the creation of form requires power, not only the power of thought...but also the power of organization and the organization of power" ("A Faith for the Free"). It is only by our deliberate creation of NUU power that our faith can become a religious force in the Northwoods community.

For a couple of reasons, I think the creation of NUU power begins with the purposeful expansion of our membership. First, I have often thought that if a dozen of our members, for whatever reason, were no longer with us, the fellowship could wither, even die. Too few people are carrying an exorbitant workload in our NUU Fellowship. And others of us have yet to find our place in the workings of the fellowship organization. Second, JLA suggested, "If its membership is varied and includes people of all ages and social ranks, many occupations, various types and levels of ability, degrees of wealth, etc., then the church will address a much broader range of human concerns than do other, more narrowly based groups" (UUA biography).

Working toward a larger more diverse membership would save NUU from another of JLA's criticisms of UU's. He urged our denomination to move beyond "the interests of a 'respectable' group" and their reliance on a "pre-established harmony," to encourage one another to commit to our highest ideals ("The Changing Reputation of Human Nature").

Our NUU mission is to be a Beacon of Light in the Northwoods, and we still can do that. A part-time minister could help us kindle our flame of fellowship into a glorious beacon of northern lights across the Northwoods. We can make that the next step in NUU history if only we continue our core faith in one another.

You have my commitment. I am out of the area for half the year, but I am as close as the phone or internet and while here and from afar I will work for us.

Answer from Jerry Buerer: All seriousness aside, it should be noted that normally we respondents are paid to answer one question for each issue of the newsletter, but sly old Dr. Woolpy has tried to sneak through three for the price of one this time. Not only that, but the questions seem considerably more difficult this time 'round. After several weeks of pondering responses, out of frustration I'm tempted to answer each as follows: (1) How do we NUUs square with Adam's criterion? Answer: We probably don't; (2) What is our explicit theology? Answer: Come now, Jerry, you know we don't have one; and (3) Are we striving to examine and explain ourselves individually and collectively? Answer: Some of us are, some of us aren't.

Okay! I'll be more serious. Personally, I find it difficult to consider UUism "a theology"

in terms of an "explicit" set of concrete beliefs similar to the beliefs characteristic of more traditional religions. Possibly—if we really stretch the definition of "theology," our Seven Principles, in a very loose way, qualify as one, but I also must ask, "so who cares" since I think one of the major attractions, if not charms, of UUism is just this lack of a rigid theology.

Personally, I'm not presently struggling to "examine and explain" myself individually. Basically it's a case of "been there, done that." I'm very content with my current "Agnostic Christian" perspective, though admittedly I'm open to new knowledge and convincing arguments should either or both come along. And I have great sympathy with those who are currently struggling with their religious ideology—goodness knows, like many others in our group, I know what that is like and I am more than happy to share anything I have to offer which might help them in their struggle—especially sympathy and understanding. Collectively—hey, we're always struggling to explain ourselves—that's the nature of the beast, and again, it's one of the great attractions of our religion. It's the price we pay in exchange for the variety and diversity we tolerate in our ranks, and while on occasion I envy folks who subscribe to a more orthodox, cut and dried theology, my envy is typically short lived.

Overall, I think James Luther Adams would enjoy participation in our life at the Northwoods UU Fellowship, at least during the warm months. Were he still alive, it would be great to have him attend our Sunday Adult Education sessions—I'm sure we could set him straight on at least a few things. ▪

Attention NUUSLETTER Readers

Those who are not members may receive the NUUSLETTER by email free of charge or may opt to pay \$12 per year to have it mailed to them through the US Postal Service. Members are encouraged to receive the NUUSLETTER by email or they may have it posted to them. Notify jerryw@earlham.edu to receive the NUUSLETTER by email. We give special thanks to the 42 out of 66 subscribers who, by use of email, have helped to reduce our NUUSLETTER budget by \$500.

Next NUUSLETTER Deadline, Sunday, December 16, 2001.

Northwoods UU Fellowship Newsletter
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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED
