



# The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of La Crosse Newsletter

Sunday Services: Program at **9:30 AM** followed by refreshments at **10:45 AM**  
Southside Senior Center, 1220 Denton Street, La Crosse, WI  
Fellowship Mail Address: PO Box 2676, La Crosse, WI 54602-2676  
Message Center: 608-796-9993  
Web site: [www.uulacrosse.org](http://www.uulacrosse.org)

February, 2003

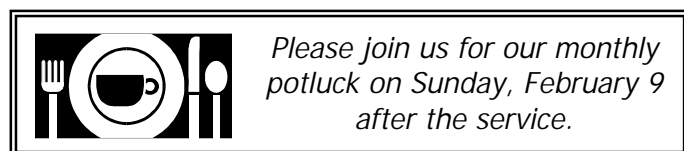
## Upcoming Programs

**February 2 – “Iraq, Weapons of Mass Destruction, and Our Values as UUs.”** Red Haines and Ron Malzer will provide a background history of the Iraq crisis, and a review of the latest developments. The congregation will then divide into small groups and seek to apply UU values in addressing some painful dilemmas. **Choir Sunday.**

**February 9 – “Dances of Universal Peace.”** The Dances of Universal Peace originated in the Sufi tradition of singing divine songs, reciting mystical poetry, rhythmically moving the body and performing rituals that “free the soul of its attachments to the outer ‘husk’ of life, that it may regain knowledge of its Source.” The dances are now practiced all over the world by those who reaffirm a commitment to peace within and without. Anyone who would like to help Lois Duna present—especially singers—please contact her at \_\_\_\_\_ or at \_\_\_\_\_. **Potluck to follow.**

**February 16 – “Cultivating Authentic Happiness.”** The Rev. Christa Landon will present the “spiritual disciplines” of the pleasant life, the good life, and the meaningful life. She will explore what current psychological research tells us about how we can make the most of our precious lives. And she’ll give tips on how our UU congregation can help us in the process. **Choir Sunday.**

**February 23 – “Life Journeys of Notable Women.”** Come celebrate Women’s History Month by exploring the life journeys of some notable female figures. Fellowship members Ann Beechler and Madelon Wise will relate the lives of Barbara Jordan, Margaret Mead, Sojourner Truth, Lucy Stone, Jane Adams, Kate Millet and Mary Daly, and will tie them into the symbolism of the labyrinth.



## Religious Education News

By Kim Cobb

Many e-mails are exchanged on the REACH list, which is a UUA list serve open to those involved in or interested in RE. I often just file them (for future reference, naturally!), but the recent exchange regarding mealtime prayers caught my eye. In addition to the enrichment you may find within your own family, these prayers can provide a means of UU expression for our children. When visiting family or friends who “say grace,” they can offer their own version.

For those interested in incorporating a mealtime ritual involving thanks, here are a few that were submitted:

*Earth, we thank you for this food  
For rest and home and all things good  
For wind and rain and sun above  
But most of all for those we love.*

*For food in a world where many walk in hunger;  
For faith in a world where many walk in fear;  
For friends in a world where many walk alone;  
We give thanks.  
(Modified from: Huron Hunger Fund, Anglican Church of Canada)*

*“In the light of love and the warmth of this family  
We gather to seek, to sustain, and to share.”*

*“May we come to know what is good in us, to use what is good in us, and to share what is good in us with one another.”  
—Donald T Marshall*

*Blest be the hand that plants the seed,  
Blest be the earth giving all that we need,  
Blest be the food we share among friends,  
Blest be the love that never ends.*

Also recommended was the book “Rejoice Together!” Many “prayers, meditations, and other readings” of all lengths in this little paperback (two pages alone of short table graces.) Available at the UUA bookstore site: <http://www.uua.org/bookstore/>.

## **Teachers for the Inquiring Group:**

February 2 - Kim Cobb  
February 9 - Liz Spangler  
February 16 - Laurie Rogers  
February 23 - Connie Long

## **A Grown-up's view of a Prairie Star District Youth Conference**

*By Kim Cobb*

The Youth Spirituality Conference that was held in early January in Rochester was a great learning experience for me. I couldn't agree more with the DRE there, who wrote, "UU kids never cease to amaze me. It is my absolute conviction that if adults support our UU youth to grow in leadership, the long term result will have a tremendously positive impact on the world."

This was what they call a "working con," and we did just that! (Other conferences are more directed towards community building activities - i.e. fun!) We had workshops and developed our own worship services, based on the model the youth of our faith use. It was a very intense, a lot of fun, and quite rewarding. The adults and youth worked together in ever-changing teams, using different themes for the services. Our last one was based on "found objects," and my group had to develop a service based on a "Get Fuzzy" comic strip, an old Pez dispenser and a rather beat up toy. One of the kids came up with "old friends" as a theme, and we took it from there! I was pleased to find that many of the elements of these moving "circle worships" seem inherent in the way our services are run. Key to that, I would say, is the feeling that we are a part of the service, and the easy-going nature of acceptance when all does not go according to plan!

It was also heartening to share the successes and concerns of other groups relative to the workings of their congregations. One strong message I took away regarding working together to resolve problems is "assume good will." After all, each of us is trying to do what we think is best!

Our facilitators were a father/son team from Texas, so we got the benefit of their broader experiences traveling around the country. The youth of the Rochester church were the organizers, and they took responsibility for most everything-they did a great job! I'm looking forward to attending more conferences, and hope more of our youth can make it to at least one of these this year. For more info, check out [www.uuyouth.net/psdyruu/](http://www.uuyouth.net/psdyruu/)

## **OWL Training Available, Leaders Needed:**

*By Laurie Rogers*

We are looking for adult members who would be interested and willing to undergo a weekend training in Minneapolis (April 2003) enabling us to offer "Our Wholes Lives" (The OWL curriculum) to our middle school kids. We need a minimum of one male and one female as a team, but more volunteers would be even better, as we could spread the responsibility between more people, or maybe be able to also offer OWL at the high school level. OWL is a very important and well put together curriculum about issues surrounding human

sexuality through the life span. I envision offering this curriculum maybe 1 to 2 times per month, and possibly coordinating a combined group with Winona's fellowship...??? It all depends upon finding leaders (both male and female) I myself would like to get trained, but I would also like to have company in this endeavor. Think about it. You would be making an incredible contribution to the lives of our children, and in the process will so likely find yourself enriched.

Please let Kim Cobb or me know if you would consider this. I will also send this message to the Winona fellowship.

## **Choir News**

*By Becky Post*

The choir will sing the following Sundays in February:  
February 2<sup>nd</sup> and February 16<sup>th</sup>

The UU choir rehearses on the Sundays we sing at 9:00 AM on the second floor of our meeting place. We also rehearse one weeknight a month.

New singers are always welcome to join us. For more information, call either of the directors, Eric Kraemer or Becky Post

## **Fellowship Book Group**

*By Kim Cobb*

The next meeting will be Thursday, Feb 20<sup>th</sup> at the Cobb's, Call for directions. As usual, readers at various stages of the book are welcome!

We'll read "Year of Wonders," by Geraldine Brooks. A brief description from the book jacket: Through housemaid Anna's eyes we follow the story of the plague year, 1666, as her fellow villagers make an extraordinary choice: convinced by a visionary young minister they elect to quarantine themselves within the village boundaries to arrest the spread of the disease. But as death reaches into every household, faith frays. When villagers turn from prayers to murderous witch hunting, Anna must confront the deaths of family, the disintegration of her community, and the lure of illicit love. As she struggles to survive, a year of plague becomes instead annus mirabilis, a "year of wonders."

## **Upcoming Meetings**

The Program Committee will meet on Sunday, February 2 after the service.

The Building Committee will meet on Saturday, February 8, at 9:30 AM at the Main Branch of La Crosse Public Library.

The Board of Trustees will meet on Thursday, February 20, at 7:00 PM at Margaret Dihlmann-Malzer's house.

**Monthly Caregiver**

The Caregiver sends cards and flowers to Fellowship members and friends as needed, and helps pass on the word if someone needs cheer or support.

If you know of any member who is ill, has suffered a loss, or is having a rough time and could use cheering, please let the Caregiver know. Fellowship members don't always know of other members' difficulties, but we would like to extend a hand to any of our members and friends in need, so please let us know about your hardships, as well as the joys in your lives.

*The February Caregiver is Madeline Kepner,*

**February Volunteers**

**February 2**

Food: ..... Kate Bain  
Setup/Cleanup: ..... Celine Donofrio and Mary Welch  
Greeter: ..... Ann Beechler

**February 9**

Food: ..... POTLUCK  
Setup/Cleanup: ..... NEED TWO VOLUNTEERS  
Greeter: ..... NEED ONE VOLUNTEER

**February 16**

Food: ..... Ann & Oliver Beechler  
Setup/Cleanup: ..... NEED TWO VOLUNTEERS  
Greeter: ..... Liz Spangler

**February 23**

Food: ..... Lisa Metz-Belzer  
Setup/Cleanup: ..... Bill Katra and ONE MORE VOLUNTEER  
Greeter: ..... Matt Bosworth

**March 2**

Food: ..... Celine Donofrio  
Setup/Cleanup: ..... NEED TWO VOLUNTEERS  
Greeter: ..... Ann Beechler

**New Horizons Challenge**

*By Ellen Severson*

I challenge you!

This fellowship did a grand job for New Horizons over the holidays; we collected two carloads full of stuff for our two families, who badly needed the help.

The need is there year-round, though, and New Horizons, which helps families escape from abusive situations and start new lives, needs lots of products for women and their children. The shelter's wish lists are on the back table each Sunday, in case you want to pick up a copy and tuck it into your wallet, purse, or pocket.

Here's where the challenge comes in.

New Horizons uses a particular kind of durable Sterilite container – 70-quart Ultra Clear -- for storing supplies, clothes, and blankets. The Seversons will pop for one of those containers, have it handy each Sunday, and schlep it

to New Horizons when you generous folks fill it. Then we'll buy another, and so on.

The New Horizons wish list is pretty long. Think about the things that you'd need if you escaped your home in the middle of the night. Kids' items and personal hygiene things are on top of the list.

The next time you're out shopping and see some good deals, consider picking up one or two of the following and putting it in the New Horizons container:

- Kid stuff: underwear, pajamas, sippy cups, baby wipes, Pull-ups and diapers, baby shampoo and lotion, bubble bath, pacifiers
- School supplies: assignment notebooks, two-pocket folders, highlighters, spiral notebooks, markers, pencil cases, colored pencils, journals, brown lunch bags, purse-size calendars, colored chalk, coloring books, construction paper, copy paper, crayons, Elmer's glue, scissors, Scotch tape
- Cleaning and kitchen supplies: kitchen-size garbage bags, aluminum foil, baking pans, bleach, brooms, dish cloths and towels, kitchen utensils, broom and mops, plastic wrap, Ziploc bags.
- Hygiene stuff: bath and beauty sets, body lotion, new combs and brushes, deodorant, hair spray, hair perms, lip balm, makeup, toothpaste and toothbrushes
- Other: blankets, twin and crib sheets, paper products, women's nightgowns and robes, outlet covers, phone cards, gift certificates to area stores (including Kwik Trip), postage stamps, slippers, socks, sweatpants and sweatshirts, wallets,
- Food: juice, canned anything, cereal, coffee, jelly

**Jacob**

**Updates**

*By Kim Cobb*

As you may know, Jacob suffered a head injury last week. The will be leaving an update on Jacob's condition on their answering machine. They have grandparents and neighbors available to help at this time, but may need assistance with respite care when Jacob comes home from the hospital. (Unknown at this time.) Allison assured me that they would let us know how we could help.

**Contribution Envelopes Available**

If you would like your cash contributions to be recorded in your name (thereby becoming "contributions of record") there will be envelopes provided on brochure stand at the back. Some envelopes will also be placed in the offering basket. Just put your cash contribution in an envelope and add your name, and your cash contribution can then be credited to your name in the same way that checks are. Having your contribution recorded establishes one-half of the requirement for voting membership (signing the membership book is the other half) and also may be helpful in documenting your contributions for tax purposes.

The Fellowship still gladly welcomes all anonymous cash contributions. All anonymous cash collected on Sundays goes directly to the building fund.

*Our Fellowship's Social Justice Committee provides this series of newsletter articles highlighting various social justice issues. These articles are intended to raise awareness and stimulate thought and discussion. Opinions expressed are those of the author, not necessarily of the Fellowship or of the Social Justice Committee. Ray Starrett provides this month's article.*

### **Some of the Social Justice Hopes and Expectations of the International Criminal Court (ICC)**

By Ray Starrett

The ICC came into formal existence with the 60<sup>th</sup> ratification on April 11, 2002. By December 10, 139 countries had signed on and 81 had ratified. Unfortunately, the US sign-on by President Clinton has been "unsigned" by President Bush. The ICC has the jurisdiction to try individuals charged with the most heinous types of crimes: genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes against civilians. For myself and for this article, a major source of information and insight has been Geoffrey Robertson's Crimes Against Humanity: The Struggle for Global Justice published in 2000. Of the several books that I have reviewed on these topics, I particularly recommend Robertson's.

The crime of genocide is defined as acts in which there is an intent to destroy whole or part of a national, an ethnical, or a religious group. The mass killings in Rwanda in 1994 are a clear example. Crimes against humanity are acts that cause great and unnecessary suffering, such as murder, torture, or rape that are widespread, and committed systematically against a civilian population. The gang rape of Muslim women by some Serb battalions to terrorize in order to gain local control is a notorious example. Rape committed on a large scale without some control or political objective would be identified as a war crime along with acts of war that cause a disproportionate loss of civilian life or using civilians as shields.

It is noteworthy that all three of these types of crimes also apply to terrorist groups in addition to national leaders and military personnel.

The first and foremost hope and expectation of the ICC is a reduction in the frequency and extent of these types of crimes. Just the existence of a "permanent" court with an extensive body of laws and precedents will increase the probability of an accused perpetrator being brought to trial. To replace the historic impunity of many despots responsible for these crimes with prosecution is fundamental to that reduction. Roberts argues that prosecution is, "the only real means of retribution, and certainly the only process which offers any hope of deterring such crimes in the future" (p. 247).

Another expectation of the ICC is that investigations and trials will be able to provide truthful information about victims of torture or wrongful deaths. Death squads and "disappearances" of some South American autocratic regimes of a few years produced the extreme in pain to the families of a victim. The uncertainty filled with fear and the lack of help or even a denial from the government added to the misery of

the families. Without truthful information: grieving, closure, and relief are very difficult to find.

A third expectation, or rather a long-term hope, is that the ICC can persuade states to legislate and enforce against widespread practices that are in violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The ICC should make progress in breaking through the "cultural relativism" argument used in some human rights violations. This is especially true with violations of children. An example that is widespread in some countries is the practice of female circumcision. If the national courts can't or won't intervene, then the ICC has the power to authorize action. But of course, in bringing accused individuals to trial in this case, as with all of these types of crimes against humanity, the UN has a judicial system but no police force. It still requires some country to exhibit the will to act.

As a summary of these expectations of the ICC, it will help our hopes for improvement to contrast the possibilities like those noted above with the history of failure of the past fifty years. Robertson noted that on the first day of this new century: "Rwanda apart, not a single key perpetrator of post-Nuremberg crimes against humanity was in prison..." (p. 445).

For more information about NGOs working to bring the US to re-signing the ICC, consult [www.amicc.org](http://www.amicc.org) and/or [www.usaforicc.org](http://www.usaforicc.org). For information about the court itself, the UN Web site is [www.un.org](http://www.un.org).

### **Fire Victims**

By Laurie Rogers

In November, our next door neighbor lost everything they owned when their house burned. They were out of town, so there were no injuries or loss of lives fortunately. This couple in their late 40s has raised 3 children, and has dealt with her multiple sclerosis (MS) for many years. She lost a brand new electric wheel chair among other things. The insurance results have been poor. They have to essentially start all over again. A group of 8 neighboring families have been planning a big benefit to raise funds for them. There will be a meal and auction at the La Crescent Legion on Sunday, February 23 from noon to 6:00 PM. Jeff and I will be selling meal tickets and raffle tickets for that day. There will be cash prizes. Raffle tickets are \$5.00 each or 3 for \$10.00. I'll always have some with me, or call and leave a message if you'd like me to mail you some. Checks can be written to "Sonnek Benefit," and donations to an account by that name can be taken to Merchant's Bank in La Crescent. Tickets can also be purchased at the Houston County News office in La Crescent.

The fund-raiser will include a silent and a live auction. If any of you have items or services you wouldn't mind donating (even interesting white elephants!), we're looking for help rounding things up - large or small. Call Laurie or Jeff at Thanks!

**Budget and Financial Update**

The fiscal 2003 budget has been finalized. We are budgeting for about \$10,000 more than we spent last year. Increases include things like Business Manager salary and associated IRS costs, paying a coordinator for a full year, money for consultants and retreats, plus increased budgets for almost all committees to expand programming and services. See below for a summary of the budget. Any member who wants a copy of the detailed final budget should request it from a board member.

We have \$27,020 pledged for this year. That is approximately a \$10,000 increase in pledges from last year. We are grateful to everyone who pledged this year. We could have never realized such an increase in total pledges with out the exceptional generosity of our members and friends in this challenging economic climate.

Currently we have 57 voting members. This is the number that will be reported to the UUA and used as our official membership for the UUA’s 2003-2004 fiscal year. Among other things, our official membership determines the dues that the congregation pays to be a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association and the Prairie Star District. Our dues will be \$61.50 per Voting Member this year (\$47 per member to the UUA and \$14.50 per member to PSD). Dues collected by the UUA and PSD go to support such things as the UUA bookstore and publications like World magazine, leadership training and workshops that assist congregational leaders, development of lifespan religious education and worship materials, training and resources for religious educators, and public advocacy and witness programs that share UU views with the rest of the world.

On other money matters: Our current net worth is \$44,034.54, with \$34,166.91 of that in the Building Fund, and \$9,867.63 in the Operating Fund.

We would like to thank all the members of the Annual Campaign Committee, co-chaired by Kathy Schnitzius and Bob Huff, for their efforts in helping to raise this year’s pledges. We also thank the members of our new finance committee, chaired by Red Haines, for preparing this year’s budget.

TOTAL EXPENSES..... \$27,479.00

TOTAL ADMINISTRATION..... \$14,142.00

Break down for Administration:

- Bus Manager ..... \$2,600.00
- Conferences ..... \$1,900.00
- Consulting & Legal ..... \$460.00
- Coordinator ..... \$3,600.00
- Electronics ..... \$500.00
- Food Supplies ..... \$450.00
- Insurance ..... \$350.00
- IRS Fees ..... \$1,047.00
- Post Office Box ..... \$60.00
- Postal & Printing ..... \$650.00
- Rent ..... \$1,950.00
- Telephone ..... \$375.00
- Misc. .... \$200.00

TOTAL COMMITTEES ..... \$9,750.00

Breakdown for Committees:

- Communications ..... \$1,730.00
- Finance ..... \$100.00
- Long-Range Planning ..... \$ 1,000.00
- Member Services ..... \$570.00
- Music ..... \$600.00
- Nominating ..... \$100.00
- Program ..... \$2,680.00
- RE & Child Cte ..... \$2,770.00
- Social Justice Cte ..... \$200.00

DUES ..... \$3,587.00

Breakdown for Dues:

- PSD Dues ..... \$750.00
- Annual Program Fund (UUA)..... \$2,612.00
- UUSC Match ..... \$225.00



**About Membership**

Our Bylaws state that, "Any person may become a voting member of this Fellowship who is in sympathy with its purpose, has signed the membership book, and makes an annual contribution of record." That means that to be a voting member, you must have **both** signed the Membership Book **and** made an annual contribution of record. If you did just one or the other of these, you are not counted as a Voting Member. The annual contribution of record is either a pledge for 2003 or an identifiable donation since September 1, 2002. While the details spelled out above may seem picky and unimportant, they are relevant to our relationship to the larger UU community. We pay annual dues to both the UUA and the Prairie Star District based on our certified number of members. For the current year that totals \$60.05 per member. We are allowed voting delegates at General Assembly based on the number of members we have. These numbers become especially relevant if we ever need to borrow money to purchase or build our own building.

## **What Constitutes Just War?**

By Red Haines

Diane, Ray Starrett, and I attended a program on “Just War Theory and Iraq” at the First Congregational Church, UCC, in La Crosse, on January 19. I commend that Church and its Pastor, Rev. Joan Sulser, for their service to the community. Rev. Sulser gave me permission to further distribute material used.

In “Just War Theory,” Alex Moseley, Ph.D. presents the theory of “just war” and the distinction between the rules that govern the justice of war from those that govern just and fair conduct in war. He asserts that the two ethical positions offer a set of moral guidelines for waging war that are neither unrestricted nor too restrictive. His paper helped me greatly to clarify my own thoughts on the subject.

“The Church’s Teaching on War and Peace,” from the Office of Social Development & World Peace, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, cites teachings of Pope John XXIII in which, in a prophetic insight that seems to anticipate the globalization of our problems, the Pope called for new forms of political authority. Two quotes attributed to the Pope are: “Peace does not consist merely in the absence of war, but rather in sharing the goodness of life together.” “Solidarity requires that we think and act in terms of our obligations as members of a global community, despite differences of race, religion or nationality.”

The paper addresses, among other issues, two traditions that have succeeded in the past century: Nonviolence and Just War.

The criteria it lists to justify war are: Just Cause, Comparative Justice, Legitimate Authority, Right Intention, Probability of Success, Proportionality, and Last Resort. The paper expands and discusses each.

In my opinion, this paper expresses the criteria more clearly and more acceptably than other sources have. I don’t agree entirely regarding Legitimate Authority and I propose some clarification or exceptions to Probability of Success and to Last Resort.

The paper goes on to address the need to limit the means of war and the rights and obligations of individuals to both general conscientious objection and selective conscientious objection. It acknowledges: “Selective conscientious objection poses complex, substantive and procedural problems, which must be worked out by moralists, lawyers and civil servants in a way that respects the rights of conscience without undermining the military’s ability to defend the common good.”

I wish to share one other thought, prompted by the discussion Sunday evening. We all need better information with which to decide whether war with Iraq is

justified. What aggression or massive violation of the rights of whole populations serves as a just cause for attacking Iraq at this time? What government or international organization can legitimately authorize an attack? Is the intention for a war at this time to correct a grave evil or is it one of many perceived intentions that are not truly just? What is the probability of success, which cannot be answered without defining the objective of a war? Is there no nonviolent alternative to war remaining, or is there some eminent evil that must be ended very soon?

Persons wishing more information may call me and may search “just war” on the Internet.

## **UU Women’s History Exhibit in Bloomington MN**

MN Valley UU Fellowship, (10715 Zenith Avenue South, Bloomington, MN 55431, Phone: 952-884-8956) invites you to a free afternoon of inspiration and fun, learning about Unitarian Universalist women who contributed to the reform of society, religion, education, and peace and justice! On Sunday March 9, noon to 4 PM **Standing Before Us**, the UU Women's Heritage Society's Traveling Exhibit of 70 museum quality panels will be on display. Plus, the Rev. Sarah Barber-Braun, historian, scholar, and one of the contributors will be with us. Come after attending your regular worship service! Bring family and friends! Jeanne Inglehart, UU restaurateur (Cafe of the Americas), will offer soup, salad, bread (donation). Pride in our UU identity, a warm fire, good food, hospitality GUARANTEED on a winter day!

## **Useful New Sites on the Web**

Check the UUA home page for some interesting new sites and email lists:

Families – The UU Family Network Clearinghouse Packet, *Generations of Faith*, is online at <http://www.uua.org/families/resources/index.html>.

Planned giving – Volunteers working on this kind of fundraising can share ideas and information with their counterparts in other UU congregations, <http://www.uua.org/mailman/listinfo/uu-plannedgiving>.

Ministry – *The Religious Leader*, the newsletter from the Ministry and Professional Leadership Staff Group, is at <http://www.uua.org/ministry/>.

History - *The Dictionary of Unitarian and Universalist Biography* offers biographies of Unitarian and Universalist leaders and celebrated individuals whose religion was Unitarian, Universalist, or Unitarian Universalist at <http://www.uua.org/uuhs/duub/index.html>.

Visit our Fellowship Web site:

[www.uualacrosse.org](http://www.uualacrosse.org)

### **Come to a Focus Dinner in February**

The first of our series of Focus Dinners will be held on Saturday February 1st and Sunday February 2nd. Other dinners will be scheduled on weekends throughout the month of February. Focus Dinners are potlucks, held in members' homes with from 8 to 12 Fellowship members gathered for a guided discussion of individual visions for the Fellowship's future. The dinners will offer a venue for members to share concerns, comments, and hopes about the Fellowship, while also providing a chance to share a meal and socialize in some of our members' homes. Sign-up sheets for the dinners will be available throughout the month, so check your February calendars, and sign up right away. We strongly encourage all members to participate in one of the dinners. This is a great opportunity to express your hopes for the future of our Fellowship, and to share some fun and conversation with others in the congregation.

### **Foreign Policy, \$1 Per Person**

*By Diane Haines*

On December 23, 2002, Ellen Goodman, a columnist for the Boston Globe, wrote reminding us of the Bush administration's policy toward world population education and control. The following are excerpts from her column.

“First came the global gag rule, refusing funds to any group that would tell a woman where she could get an abortion, even in countries where abortion was legal.”

“Next came the withholding of money to United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) on the blatantly false grounds that the organization helped the Chinese government push coercive abortions.”

“The White House has never acknowledged that women's freedom includes the freedom to decide when and how to have children. The women in the poorest parts of the world were held hostage to domestic politics. Did the administration think we'd never notice?”

“At the recent UN population conference, our government tried to overturn international agreements. Asian countries came to Bangkok to implement the 1994 UN Cairo agreement on population. The United States came to unravel the agreement. It wanted to talk about natural family planning and to delete any references to reproductive health. Among the US delegates were a man who previously represented the Vatican and a woman who lectured the Asians on her own success using the rhythm method. Our country ended up a minority of one.”

Jane Roberts and Lois Abramson began a grass-roots attempt at raising the \$34 million withheld by our government from the UNFPA. The women wondered what would happen if 34 million Americans each gave a dollar to make up for the money? So was born “34 Million Friends.” As of this writing, Americans have donated

\$150,005 (\$5 from me). This is an idea that comes with a place where we can offer aid as well as dissent, a dollar as well as a message of connection to the women of the world: US Committee for UNFPA, 220 E. 42<sup>nd</sup> St., New York, NY 10017.

One dollar per person to have your voice heard. A low price to slow this administration's recession into the Dark Ages.

### **The Building Corner**

*“The Building Corner” column provides regular updates on issues related to finding appropriate meeting space for our Fellowship. Madeline Kepner provides this month's column.*

### **Building Search**

*By Madeline Kepner*

It is amazing to me that Connie Long and Margaret Dihlmann-Malzer have been working to find a building for the Fellowship for ten years. I am reminded of Horton, the elephant, who hatched the egg because he was faithful 100%. Ten years ago, members chose the most important issues to be addressed. Among those issues were the needs for more room, and to have our own meeting space.

Connie and Margaret have listed 27 buildings that they have examined for our use, 10 more were checked out but not examined, and 8 lots (one selling for over one million dollars) were also checked out. Two properties seemed to be reasonable possibilities but one proved not to meet city code requirements and the other was sold to another buyer since we were not able to make an offer for \$192,500. Eventually, we hope to have a chart showing the properties that have been investigated.

Space needs that were reported at the last Building Committee meeting included a meeting room of 1936 square feet that would accommodate 100 people plus choir, piano and speaker. Usable space at the Senior Center is 1320 square feet. We would plan for 6 classrooms, 2 office/conference spaces, and a kitchen space. Other space needs include entrance, halls, storage, bathrooms, and mechanical to total 4500 square feet. The lowest end for new construction costs is \$55 to \$60 per square foot.

A year ago I contacted the UUA Director of Congregational Fundraising. He stated that we need a cash flow direction for the past, current and future. We have to clarify a vision of growth by strengthening our staffing and programming. In keeping with his recommendations, this year we had a successful canvass of members for the operating fund and will continue that process. We have formed a finance committee that is working to get our financial house in order. We were told that it would take about three years to plan a successful Capital Fund Drive. Meanwhile, the Finance Committee will search for funding opportunities. We currently have about \$30,000 in our Building Fund.

We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote:

- j The inherent dignity and worth of every person;
- j Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations;
- j Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
- j A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
- j The rights of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
- j The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;
- j Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

The living tradition which we share draws from many sources:

Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life;

Words and deeds of prophetic women and men which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love;

Wisdom from the world's religions which inspire us in our ethical and spiritual life;

Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves;

Humanistic teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit;

Spiritual teachings of earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.

