

# The Minnesota Atheist

February/March 2026  
Volume 36  
Number 2

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## Natural Magic: Emily Dickinson, Charles Darwin, and the Dawn of Modern Science February Public Meeting

*By: Renée Bergland (appearing live via Zoom)*

Charles Darwin was born on February 12, 1809. In that month we often have a speaker on evolution. This year we are pleased to feature a merging of science and art. In 2024, Prof. Renée Bergland published her book *Natural Magic: Emily Dickinson, Charles Darwin, and the Dawn of Modern Science*.

Emily Dickinson and Charles Darwin were born at a time when the science of studying the natural world was known as natural philosophy, a pastime for poets, priests, and schoolgirls. The world began to change in the 1830s, while Darwin was a young naturalist aboard the Beagle and Dickinson was a student in Amherst, Massachusetts. Poetry and science started to grow apart, and modern thinkers challenged the old orthodoxies, offering thrilling new perspectives that suddenly felt radical — and too dangerous for women.

Natural Magic intertwines the stories of these two luminary nineteenth-

February continued on page 4

### Sunday, February 15, 2026

1:00 p.m.: Library opens. Social Time. Zoom starts.  
1:15–1:45 p.m.: Business Meeting  
1:45–2:00 p.m.: Break/Social Time  
2:00–3:30 p.m.: Program  
3:30 p.m.: Leave for dinner

#### Dinner:

Longfellow Grill  
2990 W. River Pkwy.  
Minneapolis, MN 55406  
(1.4 miles west of the library, just over the Mississippi River, where Marshall Ave. in St. Paul turns into E. Lake St. in Minneapolis.)

Merriam Park Library  
1831 Marshall Ave.  
St. Paul, MN 55104



#### Online:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82344512218?pwd=VWNDckI2bVUx-eWJDTnAzU3BhQnNRdz09>

#### Or call in:

+13092053325,,82344512218#,,,\*676832#

## President's Column Immigrants Make America Great

*By Heather Hegi*

I'm probably talking to the choir, but I've been appalled at the sheer disregard towards human lives and disregard of the rule of law that ICE has been inflicting on our state. They are picking up legal im-

migrants and even U.S. born citizens due to the color of their skin, and don't face any repercussions for holding them for hours in uncomfortable handcuffs, denying bathroom breaks, and inflicting pain and fear simply for being a minority. Not even undocumented immigrants deserve this kind of treatment. Everyone deserves to be treated humanely

**Immigrants** continued on page 8

## Cryptogram

*By George Francis Kane*

TNFSPRQ OIAUPRFSR UB QTU XPNF TADIQSUNR  
NB CS GPKPBIR; CIN RIHSARNPNPBU, BA XFTN  
NFS XBAJZ QSTUR CW ASJPDPBU, PR NFS  
DASTNSRN HBRRPCJS SUKBIATDSQSUN NB GPKS,  
CW RSNNPUD IH RBQSNFPUD TR ASJPDPBU XFPKF  
RFTJJ TNBUS TUZ KBQQINS OBA NFS XTUN BO  
GPANIS.

XPJJPTQ HPNN NFS SJZSA, TZZASRR NB NFS

*HSBHJS BO SUDJTUZ*



## News and Notes Protecting (Christian) Human Rights

By *George Francis Kane*

At the beginning of November President Donald Trump officially declared Nigeria a “Country of Particular Concern” (CPC) for severe violations of religious freedom. On his Truth Social media platform, he threatened that the United States would halt all foreign aid payments and “go into that disgraced country, guns-a-blazing” if the Nigerian government continued “to allow the killing of Christians.” His threat to administer “fast, vicious, and sweet” punishment was finally executed with sixteen strikes by U.S. precision missiles against alleged ISIS training camps on Christmas Day.

The attack was promoted by weeks of lobbying by conservative Christian organizations urging Trump to designate as CPCs Nigeria along with Russia, Saudi Arabia, Iran, and China for alleged religious persecution. Trump apparently believes that posturing on the persecution of Christians abroad will resonate strongly with his Christian nationalist base.

I always regard the decision by any government to take a firm stand in opposition to human rights abuses anywhere in the world to be laudable. Too often we see U.S. foreign policy turn a blind eye to savagery in distant corners of the globe like East Timor or Sudan when American interests are not directly involved. The Trump administration is hardly the first to shine the guiding light of its foreign policy on the principle of “America first,” but history has provided us many examples to prove that an aggressive response can too easily result in becoming overextended. Still, if Trump takes a principled stand to stop the plunder and murder, inflicted because of their choice of religion, of a significant population in Africa’s most populous nation, I will applaud.

There is considerable doubt, however, that religious persecution accurately describes the situation of Nigeria’s Christians. The Nigerian gov-

ernment and many experts argue that extremist groups target both Christians and Muslims, and that the conflict is only rhetorically a religious war. Security challenges in Nigeria are complex, involving ethnic tensions, competition for resources, and criminal banditry, not just a “holy war.” Critics contend that Trump’s rhetoric exacerbates divisions within Nigeria, and may only encourage further violence.

Nigeria’s religious demographics are nearly evenly split between Muslims and Christians, with Muslims forming a slight majority in the North, and Christians concentrated in the South. Terrorist Muslim bands attack both Christian farmers and Muslim herders in a lust for territorial dominance. In Central Nigeria, where Christians constitute a majority of the population, most of the victims of terrorist murders are Christian. The U.S. missile attacks, however, were in Northwest Nigeria, against ISIS training camps. In this region, most of the victims are Muslims. According to the independent group

*Trump apparently believes that posturing on the persecution of Christians abroad will resonate strongly with his Christian nationalist base.*

Armed Conflict Location & Event Data (ACLED), last year’s data show that the rise in Christian fa-

talities occurred mostly in central Nigeria, and that the vast majority of these incidents were over land disputes, rather than religious division.

The insurgent slaughter in Nigeria is appalling, and everyone should laud serious attempts to bring it to an end. Portraying it simply as religious violence is a serious error, however, which risks turning the targeting of all Christians into a reality. The murder of Christians and Muslims is equally unacceptable. Regrettably, our involvement seems to be not for the defense of human rights, but only to trumpet America’s military allegiance to Christianity.

Perhaps Trump envies King Charles for his ceremonial title of “Defender of the Faith.” The President of the United States, however, must be faithful to his nation’s commitment to its constitutional promise of the separation of state and religion. The problem with the U.S. military action in Nigeria is that the Establishment Clause forbids government to prefer one religion over

February continued from page 1

century minds whose thought and writings captured the awesome possibilities of the new sciences and at the same time strove to preserve the magic of nature. Just as Darwin's work was informed by his roots in natural philosophy and his belief in the interconnectedness of all life, Dickinson's poetry was shaped by her education in botany, astronomy, and chemistry, and by her fascination with the enchanting possibilities of Darwinian science.

Casting their two very different careers in an entirely fresh light, Renée Bergland brings to life a time when ideas about science were rapidly evolving, reshaped by poets, scientists, philosophers, and theologians alike. She paints a colorful portrait of a remarkable century that transformed how we see the natural world.

*Prof. Renée Bergland is the Program Director of Literature and Writing in the Department of Humanities at Simmons University in Boston. She has published articles, essays, and reviews for general readers in The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Los Angeles Times, Nautilus, and The Boston Globe.*

## Atheist Refugee Assistance Program (ARAP)

### March Public Meeting

Sunday, March 15, 2026 (times are the same as page 1)

*By Onur Romano*

Since we began, Minnesota Atheists has cared about atheists wherever they are. That's why we are affiliated with Atheist Alliance International (AAI) and Humanists International (HI).

Onur Romano is an atheist refugee currently living in Victoria, BC, Canada. From 2012 to 2016, he helped establish multiple atheist organizations in the Republics of Turkey and Georgia. He is a board member of Center for Inquiry Canada (CFIC). In 2020, he created the Atheist Refugee Assistance Program (ARAP) (<https://atheistrefugeesturkiye.com.tr>) for non-believer asylum-



seekers in Turkey.

ARAP assists atheists whose lives are in danger, mostly because they have been outspoken atheists or critics of Islam in Muslim countries. ARAP is supported by five organizations, including Atheist Alliance International (AAI) and Center for Inquiry (CFI).

ARAP helps atheist refugees in the following ways:

- **Accommodations:** Assisting with short-term and long-term housing solutions.
- **Job Search:** Assisting in finding employment opportunities in Turkey.
- **Legal Aid:** Providing Turkish Immigration lawyers.
- **Official Letters:** Issuing letters of support/reference.
- **Direct Guidance:** Providing Financial, Educational and/or Mental Health consultations.

ARAP runs an atheist safe house in Turkey called "The Lighthouse" (<https://atheistrefugeesturkiye.com.tr/safehouse-project>). This is a temporary shelter in Istanbul. Some refugees end up staying in Turkey permanently and some go on to seek asylum in other countries, sometimes in Europe and in Canada. You can see some of the people who have been helped at Saved Lives (<https://atheistrefugeesturkiye.com.tr/category/saved-lives>).

During this meeting and presentation, we will consider ways that Minnesota Atheists can help ARAP.



Escaping to safety and freedom: Anahita's escape from torture and abuse in Iran as an atheist.

## The Frosty Atheist

By Ross Meisner



Today I offer the most profound insight I've ever had.

Like most people, I have pondered the meaning of life. Like many atheists, I have probably spent way too much time dissecting this question from many angles. It's fascinating to think about why we humans exist. But the urgent and essential question is frighteningly specific: "Why am I here?"

For a long time I was comfortable with a general conclusion based on biology. We exist as astronomically improbable life forms with an evolved higher intelligence; as lifeforms our primary purpose is simply to exist, procreate, and continue the species. Our intelligence makes this easier (we're the apex predator and we change our environment to better suit our species) but it also introduces a distracting ability to ask, "Why?"

Asking why seeks to reveal some inherent meaning in what atheists recognize is a random outcome of the universe — our existence. Over time, humanity used its higher intelligence to invent convoluted glorious explanations for that inherent meaning. We're God's angels! We're made with a purpose! We will reincarnate until we "get it right!" Whatever.

I'm here today to suggest that — despite existing in an utterly indifferent universe — there IS real meaning to each of our lives, and funnily enough, it has a connection to those glorious religious fictions of old. Religious stories were *created by us* to give our lives meaning, and that creative act is empowering, even though the old religious stories that derived from it were nonsense.

So there it is. The reason why we are here is informed by, and created by, our own minds. There is no pre-existing meaning being handed down. We get to decide and define it, individually.

In a nutshell: **"There is NO meaning to life — other than the meaning YOU give it."**

Whether one chooses to redeem a social wrong, grow a vegetable patch, or simply make one person's life easier, we each get to give our own life meaning. To me, that is a delightful, liberating, and truly profound realization.

**Nigeria** continued from page 3

any other. It would have been easy for Trump to explain the missile strikes as a rescue of all Nigerian people from terrorist groups, but he clearly framed it as a rescue of Christians because we Americans identify with them. The authors of the Bill of Rights did not intend to resume the Crusades of the Middle Ages.

### Treasury Report November, 2025

By Chris Matthews

#### Donations

\$600 Art Kallenbach  
\$200 George Kane  
\$105 Susan Gilbertson  
\$100 Lawrence Ronning  
\$50 Ross Meisner  
\$5 Steve Petersen  
\$5 Shirley Moll  
\$260 private

**\$1,325 Total Donations**

#### Expenses

\$1,050 Newsletter  
\$327 IT  
\$75 Misc

**\$1,452 Total Expenses**

**Current Building Fund — \$165,847**



## Nominee Statements Board of Directors

### Heather Hegi President

Thank you for the nomination to be president for a second year. My goal this year is to boost our dues-paying membership. I personally haven't put enough value on being a dues-paying member, not enough to ask others to pay their dues. But there's a reason I pay my membership year after year, and it's because I am passionate about atheists having a voice in Minnesota. It's important to financially support organizations you care about and support them financially with your membership dues. It's a point of strength and legitimacy to bolster a large dues-paying membership, and it's time we make it a priority.



### Eric Jayne Associate President

### August Berkshire Chair

I have been Associate Chair for the past year, but have been acting as Chair at our monthly meetings. I am happy to run for Chair this year. I plan to continue to serve on the Public Policy Committee, the Building Committee, and the Program Committee.

I have been active in the atheist movement since 1984. In addition to being on the MNA Board, I am Vice President of Atheist Alliance International. The atheist perspective is needed now as much as it ever was and I am looking forward to the upcoming year.



### Michelle Morlan Associate Chair

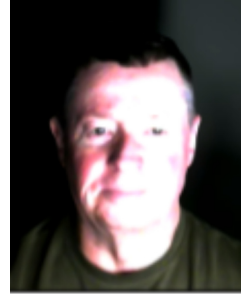
I am excited to have the opportunity to continue volunteering on the board of Minnesota Atheists for another year. I joined



in 2021 as a director at large and spent the last year as chair. I have really enjoyed working with the organization and have many thoughts for the future! I am a STEM professional, and I'm passionate about how critical science and reason are to society at large.

### Chris Matthews Treasurer

I am a Minnesota native and a life member of Minnesota Atheists. I personally value positive atheism and the separation of state and church. I have served on the board as treasurer since 2011. I am proud to help provide the infrastructure for Minnesota Atheists to pursue goals that we collectively find worthwhile, and I appreciate the opportunity to continue in this role.



### Steve Petersen Secretary

I am a founding member of Minnesota Atheists and an active volunteer with Minnesota Atheists. Why do I want to serve on the board? Because this is a partnership with the dues paying members, donors, and volunteers. Each of us has a differing amount of time and funds to make Minnesota Atheists an effective and relevant organization. Minnesota Atheists is central to my well-being as a person and personal identity, so it is natural that I would want to be part of the governing structure.

My goals for 2026 are the same as last year when I sought a board position. I want the building fund to be transferred into a useful fund that will enhance our public representation. Our building committee is following our legal advice, and we are surveying past donors to make the funds useful in today's market.

Why is there a building fund? Well I think about it this way: Today there are so many differing tragedies that impact our daily lives and the more horrendous the event the more society looks to churches for refuge and community support in framing how society grieves. If we had an atheist center, we could alter that narrative to include the secular voice in a time of social crisis. As one of our now-de-



ceased fund supporters would say when they entered a room full of atheists, “Atheists, this is like a breath of fresh air.”

I am a candidate for the board to give us the space to breathe enhanced critical thinking and secular sanity in an atmosphere of impaired religious atmosphere.

## Trevor Nelson Director at Large

I’m running for an at-large seat on the Minnesota Atheists Board of Directors because I care deeply about our community and the shared values that bring us together. As someone who openly identifies as an atheist, I strongly support the separation of church and state and believe in the importance of preserving a society where everyone’s rights and beliefs are respected. I would love the opportunity to help continue the thoughtful, meaningful work that MN Atheists is known for.

I’m also mindful of the challenges we face, including the growing influence of Christian Nationalism. While I can be passionate in my views, my goal is always to approach these issues with kindness, collaboration, and steady resolve. I hope to contribute a balanced voice — one that is both caring and committed — to ensure our organization remains strong, welcoming, and engaged. It would be an honor to serve on the board and support this community I value so much.



## Frank Leonard Eller Director at Large

I am originally from the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians reservation in Belcourt, North Dakota, by the Canadian border. I grew up somewhat conservative, as Belcourt is a small town. I also became a strong, fundamentalist Catholic during my teenage years and into my early twenties.

When I was 13, it was discovered that I needed a kidney transplant. Many people began praying for me, and I still appreciate their intentions. But it was science, not any gods, that saved my life with a kidney transplant a year later at Mayo Clinic in



Rochester, Minnesota.

In June 2013, at age 21, I began having major doubts about religion. I searched the internet and couldn’t find any atheist organizations in North Dakota, so I tried Minnesota. I called the Minnesota Atheists phone number and this led me to completing my journey to atheism. In December 2016, I moved to the Twin Cities and I immediately became part of Minnesota Atheists. I have attended many events since then and have marched in the May Day and Gay Pride parades.

I am a strong, proud agnostic atheist who believes firmly in the separation of religion and government. I am quite aware of how much damage religion continues to do to individuals and to our society.

There are two areas where I believe I can bring a special expertise to Minnesota Atheists. First, because I am Native American, I can help demonstrate to other Native Americans, as well as other racial minorities, that Minnesota Atheists can be of value to all of us.

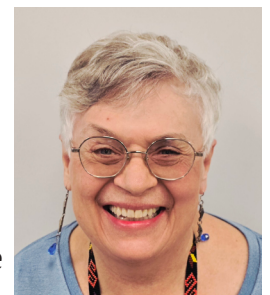
Secondly, I am blind, and this gives me a connection to the disability community. I have experienced how religion preys upon disabled people, promising us a better life, free from disabilities, after we die. This is false hope. Instead, we must help each other and work to improve life here as much as we can.

Since June 2021, I have been a voting board member of the State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind (SRCB), which is part of the State Services for the Blind (SSB) of Minnesota.

Many members of Minnesota Atheists have been very kind to me. I believe I can use my experience and talents to help Minnesota Atheists grow and I would like the opportunity to be part of our Board of Directors.

## Shelly Nelson Director at Large

I grew up attending Protestant churches and was skeptical of what was taught. Later I followed Parmahansa Yogananda and realized that I did not believe in any kind of deity. I wanted a community that shared my beliefs and joined Minnesota Atheists. My goal is to help that community thrive and grow.



**Immigration** continued from page 2

and afforded rights to plead their case.

Many like to think that America is the best country in the world, and it is a quality country which up until recently has been a land of liberty and justice for all, so, of course, people wish to migrate here to seek a better life for themselves. Our immigration system has been broken for a long time. There are not enough judges to hear cases, and the waiting time to be heard is just atrocious. Instead of fixing this system, the administration is punishing people for following it. They pick up people as they go to hearings and then revoke their temporary status. They don't care if people are following the law, they have decided that they just don't want immigrants.

On the flip side, they want us to have more babies as birth rates have been declining in the U.S. If they are truly worried about the population, it makes no sense to deport so many people. In fact, first generation immigrants are more likely to have larger families. It's not hard to figure out what they really want: they want more white babies.

"The religious right wants more white Christian babies and is trying to curtail women's reproductive freedom in order to achieve that aim," said Marian Starkey, a spokesperson for Population Connection.

They may even subscribe to the "Great Replacement Theory" which claims they will be replaced by non-white people.

People have always feared the newcomer, even here in the U.S. They are afraid of different beliefs, cultures, and languages; but we are richer for it. How many times have you been to a cultural fair where people are proud of their Scandinavian, German, or Irish heritage. Perhaps, like me, you remember stories of great-grandparents who didn't speak much English, or you may know of towns that display their cultural heritage proudly. They didn't assimilate overnight, and we shouldn't expect that of the newcomers either.

This administration is acting out of fear, narcissism, and sociopathy: Fearful of diversity, narcissistic in thinking they are of a superior race, and acting like sociopaths in how they carry out the removal of immigrants.

The only thing that's guaranteed is change. I welcome immigrants and I welcome a more diverse society. Let's keep striving for a more just world.

## **Toastmasters — January 3, 2005 Call Me An Atheist**

*By Sue O'Donnell*



**[Ring, Ring]**

Good Morning. Atheist Community Center. How may I help you?

Yes, sir. I really am an atheist.

No. I don't believe in devils. I don't believe in any supernatural creatures like gods or devils or centaurs or unicorns.

No, nothing. Well, maybe leprechauns.

No, no. Just kidding!

Well, sir, I don't mind if you pray for me. It will keep you off the streets and it certainly won't do me any harm. After all, nothing fails quite like prayer. Thanks for calling.

**[Ring]**

Atheist Community Center. How may I help you?

Yes, we really are atheists.

Yes, we have lots of meetings, lots of social activities, special speakers. Why do you ask?

Oh, you're an atheist?

You thought you were the only one? No. You've got plenty of company and you're welcome to join us.

Oh, I can assure you, this is the one place in the cities where you won't be assaulted by Christmas carols.

Yes, I know. It can be quite overwhelming at this time of year. But we do celebrate natural events. Like the winter solstice, when the days start getting longer. And you're welcome to join us.

You'll find a listing of our meetings on the Internet. Thanks for calling.

**[Ring]**

Atheist Community Center. This is Sue, how may I help you?

Yes, ma'am, I've been told that before.

Well, I'm not really concerned because I don't believe there is a hell.

No, ma'am. Don't you think eternal damna-

tion is a huge price to pay just for a difference of opinion? Seems like a bit of an over-reaction, don't you think?

Well, your god seems to have huge anger management issues. I'd rather not spend eternity with him, but if that's your choice, go for it.

You have a nice day.

**[Ring]**

Hello, Atheist Community Center. How may I help you?

No, we don't have a list of what we believe in that you can show your Sunday School class. You see, we're kind of an independent bunch of folks who think for ourselves so we don't take kindly to dogma. The one thing we absolutely agree on is the non-existence of gods.

Well, I'm sure you do believe there's only one god. Lots of people think their god is the only one. We just don't think there are any at all, but we're certainly willing to look at any empirical evidence to the contrary.

No, the good feeling you have inside you is not the kind of proof we would find convincing. There are lots of reasons people feel good — I could start listing them now if you have several hours to listen. Keep in mind your Sunday School class might not like all of them.

Well, call me if you change your mind. Have a good day.

**[Ring]**

Atheist Community Center. This is Sue, how may I help you?

God asked you to call me? Did he telephone you or send an email?

Oh, he spoke to you in a dream.

He really said that? That this would be a good day for me to hear about Jesus?

Huh. I really hate to disappoint you, but I just checked. My heart is not open to accepting Jesus into my life and being saved, so he was wrong. I'm doing very well on my own, so thanks for calling.

**[Ring]**

Good Afternoon. Atheist Community Center. How may I help you?

Yes, we really are atheists and I'm happy to hear from a fellow atheist after the calls I've been getting.

Well, they feel the need to save people from some weird fantasy world.

Yes, you're safe at our meetings. We don't pledge to a nation under god. We don't sing GBA — that's God Bless America. And no one ever breaks out in prayer or bursts into flames or starts speaking in tongues. That's a guarantee.

Yeah, I know. It does sound kinda heavenly — so to speak.

Sure, give me your email address and I'll make sure you get a list of all our activities; it's updated every week.

Thanks for calling. And stay rational.

**[Ring]**

Atheist Community Center. This is Sue. How may I help you?

Yes, that is my real name. Why would I use someone else's name?

No, no, no, I'm certainly not embarrassed or ashamed to say I'm an atheist. Why would I be?

Well, being an atheist means I don't have to worry about going straight to hell once I die. I already have other plans.

I can understand how you might have been led to believe that, but instead I prefer to be a good and productive citizen while I'm here and then once I die my wish is to be cremated and my ashes spread in the garden. If I'm lucky, someone will plant some flowers over me and then I can be literally pushing up the daisies.

I'm not going to hell so I won't be able to keep your mother-in-law company. I guess that will be something for you to look forward to.

Thanks for calling.

**[Ring]**

Hello. Atheist Community Center. How may I help you?

Do we have anyone willing to debate a Christian in front of a bunch of other Christians? Hold on.

Hey George, I got a live one for ya!

## Upcoming Monthly Events

**In Person Bowling for Deities** First Sunday of every month at 11:30 a.m., (usually) at Flaherty's Arden Bowl, 1273 West County Road E, Arden Hills, MN.

**Hybrid Freethought Toastmasters Meeting** 1st and 3rd Monday of every month from 6:30–8 p.m., Larpenteur Estates Party Room, 1280 Larpenteur Ave W, St Paul, MN.  
freethought.toastmastersclubs.org.

**Online Minnesota Atheists Board Meeting** 1st Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m.  
Email [chair@mnatheists.org](mailto:chair@mnatheists.org) for the meeting link.

### Freethinking Females

**Online** 2nd Monday of every month at 7 p.m.

**In Person** Last Monday of every month at 5:30 p.m., Sweeney's Saloon, 96 North Dale Street, St. Paul, MN.  
Shattering the myth that atheist groups are male dominated with a females-only event.

**In Person Blasphemer's Brunch** 2nd Saturday of every month at 10:30 a.m., Pizza Lucé, 800 W 66th St, Richfield, MN.

**In Person Lunch with Secular Seniors and Friends** 1st Tuesdays, 11:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Maya Cuisine, 1840 Central Ave NE, Minneapolis, MN.

**In Person Friends Free of Theism Brunch** 3rd Wednesdays, 11:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Q.Cumbers Restaurant, 7645 France Ave S, Edina, MN.

**In Person Trivia Night** Every Sunday from 5:30–8 p.m.  
Venn Brewing, 3550 E 46th St, Suite 140, Minneapolis, MN.

For more events and instructions for connecting to online events, visit:

[www.meetup.com/MinnesotaAtheists](http://www.meetup.com/MinnesotaAtheists) 



## The “Nones” That You Know

Amy Alkon

By *Milo Grika*

Amy Alkon (born March 8, 1964), also known as the Advice Goddess, is an American advice columnist. Alkon wrote a weekly advice column, Ask the Advice Goddess, which was published in over 100 newspapers within North America.

*“Come on, somebody tell me I can't possibly have morals because I'm an atheist.”*

— Amy Alkon

## Cryptogram Answer

Atheism furnishes no man with arguments to be vicious; but superstition, or what the world means by religion, is the greatest possible encouragement to vice, by setting up something as religion which shall atone and commute for the want of virtue.

William Pitt the Elder, Address to the People of England

## Get Famous (Sort of)

Email submissions to: [editor@mnatheists.org](mailto:editor@mnatheists.org) and we'll do the rest.

## Minnesota Atheists Membership and Donations

### Membership Levels

- Student membership *Free*
- One-year individual membership \$35
- Three-year individual membership \$90
- One-year household membership \$45
- Three-year household membership \$115
- One-year sustaining membership \$75
- Three-year sustaining membership \$200
- Life membership \$600

### Donation Funds

General Fund      \$\_\_\_\_\_

I would like my donation(s) to be

- private
- public
- attributed by my name only

for reporting in the Minnesota Atheists newsletter and on the website. (By default, each donation will be considered private.)

Donations are tax deductible. Membership fees are deductible for the amount beyond their fair market value.

Student memberships include a subscription to the PDF version of *The Minnesota Atheist* delivered by email. Student memberships do not have voting rights and are not able to run for the board.

All paid memberships include a subscription to the printed version delivered by postal mail. If you would prefer the PDF version delivered by email, please check the box and provide your email address.

Please make checks payable to:

**Minnesota Atheists.**

Students, please enclose a copy of your fee statement or school identification.

Minnesota Atheists  
PO Box 120304  
New Brighton, MN 55112

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Just email newsletter      Email address \_\_\_\_\_  
(Required for student memberships and email subscriptions)

## 12 The Minnesota Atheist

Minnesota Atheists

### Positive Atheism in action since 1991

Minnesota Atheists is dedicated to building a positive atheist community that actively promotes secular values through educational programs, social activities, and participation in public affairs.

#### Minnesota Atheist Board of Directors

##### Board Email

board@mnatheists.org

##### President

Heather Hegi

pres@mnatheists.org

##### Associate President

Alyssa Ehni

apres@mnatheists.org

##### Chair

Michelle Morlan

chair@mnatheists.org

##### Associate Chair

August Berkshire

achair@mnatheists.org

##### Secretary

Nancy Hertz

sec@mnatheists.org

##### Treasurer

Chris Matthews

treas@mnatheists.org

763.452.0337

##### Directors at Large

Steve Petersen

dir1@mnatheists.org

Matthew Hertz

dir2@mnatheists.org

Cathy Prody

dir3@mnatheists.org

#### The Minnesota Atheist Newsletter

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#### Minnesota Atheists

##### Affiliations

Atheist Alliance of America

Atheist Alliance International

American Atheists

The American Humanist Association

Council for Secular Humanism

The International Humanist and

Ethical Union

Secular Coalition for America

#### Minnesota Atheists

##### Membership

Regular memberships: 79

Life members:

54

Meetup subscribers:

4,517

AWE subscribers:

1,162

#### Minnesota Atheists Goals

Minnesota Atheists practices positive, inclusive, active, friendly, neighborhood atheism in order to provide a community for atheists, educate the public about atheism, and promote separation of state and church.



The Minnesota Atheist — February/March 2026

Published by Minnesota Atheists

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