



Earth Day 2012: Immigration and Environmental Justice

Cindy Davidson and Ellen McClaran, UU Ministry for Earth Board Members

Unitarian Universalist (UU) congregations across the country are engaged with our denomination's current Congregational Study/Action Issue: *Immigration as a Moral Issue*. Climate change and environmental toxins disproportionately and unjustly impact the health and economic well-being of immigrants. As UUs, we are called to deeper understanding of these issues and to put our values into action.

For Earth Day 2012, UU Ministry for Earth (UUMFE) is asking congregations to connect the impacts that environmental

issues and immigration have on each other and to commit to actions that will make our world more just. This year's resources will help you in this effort.

To start your Earth Day planning, go to www.uuministryforearth.org and click on "Take Action" then "Earth Day 2012." Be sure to register your events before Earth Day (April 22) – your ideas may inspire others and you will be entered in a drawing to win a \$50 gift certificate from the UUA Bookstore! On the website, we will also maintain an updated table of Earth Day events as congregations register so you can see what everyone is doing.

After Earth Day, please share your stories (use the same form as registration) and send your photos to office@uuministryforearth.org. We would love to post them on our Facebook page, share highlights with the UUA, and include stories in upcoming newsletters.



Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth
Earth Day 2012: Immigration and Environmental Justice

Photos, flickr/Creative Commons: (left to right) dawneicakes, Nogales, Sonora, Mexico; Colectivo Aliados 2.0, Migration and Displacement; dcipir, The Border; jvalas images, FLDC at Reynolds Tobacco

This year's *Call to Action* focuses on four main immigration/environmental justice concerns – Health, Climate Change, Border/Migration, and Population/Scapegoating. Each section contains three parts – framing the issue, more information (web links and resources), and suggested actions. This page will help you learn about environmental justice and immigration issues and plan your Earth Day actions.

Go to the *More Resources* page for books, films, and links to the extensive UUA resources on immigration.

Learn how to engage your community through press and publicity for your Earth Day event on the *Spread the Word* page. We will soon have a link to the *40/40/42 Campaign* where you can make a 40-day commitment to environmental action on a wide variety of issues. As in past years, we also have a variety of printed materials to download.

Each year, UUMFE invites congregations to honor an *Eco-Hero* with a special certificate. We will publish the names of all Eco-Heroes, along with a one-sentence description of their work, on the UUMFE website. We also invite you to nominate your Eco-Hero to be recognized as an UUMFE *Guardian of the Future*. See the main Earth Day webpage for details.

If you make your Earth Day service an opportunity to support the work of UU Ministry for Earth through a special collection, we would be so grateful. Have a just and joyous 2012 Earth Day! ♦

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ABOUT UUMFE

Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth is a non-profit organization whose supporters envision a world in which reverence, gratitude, and care for the living Earth is central to the lives of all people. As a 501(c)3 organization, contributions are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.

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From the Board

Folks Are Paying Attention!

Have you noticed that people are getting out and about more when issues become personally important? Back in August and early September, we were participating and supporting citizens in front of the White House who were drawing attention to the multiple layers of injustice around the proposed Keystone XL Pipeline and the destruction of the Tar Sands regions of Canada. In November, ten times more people showed up to encircle the White House to continue to ask our President to deny the permits for the Pipeline; they chose the date to be in Washington, D.C. with care – one year before the next presidential election. In between these two national events, groups of concerned citizens attended every Presidential appearance outside of Washington, displaying and voicing reminders about the Tar Sands issues. Now, under pressure from the Congress to make a quick decision, the President denied the permits. Whew! Heady times for those who work tirelessly on these issues.

The reports from many of the Occupy events around our country continue to highlight personal connection to a community when many participants were feeling isolated and disenfranchised. Not all of the encounters were noisy and combative, but those readily make the news headlines. I am reflecting on the experiences of participatory democracy, art encounters, celebrations, and helping build supportive and sustainable community. People begin crossing bridges to those who were formerly ‘the other,’ what we like to call partnerships. All this connection offers the opportunity to build new insights, new ideas, and new action plans.

So, What Now?

Many of us did not have the opportunity to participate in either the Tar Sands actions or the Occupy events. So, how do we join in and move forward with caring for Earth, building community, understanding injustice, and doing something based on our UU values? Well, I’m so glad you asked. UU Ministry for Earth is offering some new resources to help you learn, teach, plan, and act. The new *Our Place In the Web of Life* curriculum may be just what you and your congregation have been seeking. Here’s what the authors Dr. Mark A. Hicks and Pamela Sparr have to say, “Perhaps your congregation has been working on environmental issues for a while, even gaining accreditation as a ‘Green Sanctuary’ congregation. Or, perhaps you’re just starting by pulling together a small group within your congregation that is eager to make a difference.’ Does this describe your current situation? You can preview and download the curriculum on the UU Ministry Earth website.

My small congregation in Florida was a pilot site for the curriculum and we loved it. We had a multigenerational group from ages 22 to 86, and we are still reaping benefits over a year after going through the proposed sessions. The 22-year-old is now on our Board of Trustees; we discovered she has a real talent for group planning. We are also looking forward to going through the updated version as a way of renewing our views and actions. After you review the curriculum, you may want to join one of

cont'd on next page

News From UU Ministry For Earth

From the Board, cont'd

our webinars to assist you in facilitating the sessions. Visit the UU Ministry for Earth website to sign-up.

Please mark your calendars for April 22 – Earth Day 2012. UU Ministry for Earth is providing the annual Earth Day resources for UU congregations on our website. This is a wonderful time to join congregations and citizens all around the world as we focus on our concerns and celebrations for Earth. Perhaps you can build on the current and potential partnerships that you may have identified in the sessions of *Our Place In the Web of Life*.

Irene Keim, Co-Chair, UU Ministry for Earth Board ♦

UUMFE Partners with Just Label It Campaign for GE Foods

Ann May, UUMFE Board Member

In Oct. 2010, the annual Thomson Reuters PULSE™ Healthcare Survey showed that 93 percent of Americans support mandatory labeling of genetically engineered (GE) foods. Without such labeling,

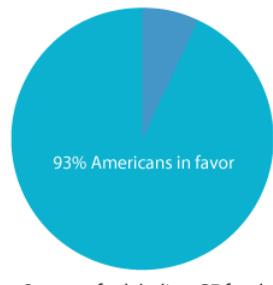
consumers cannot make informed decisions about the food they purchase and eat.

In Sept. 2011, the Center for Food Safety submitted a legal petition to the FDA calling for the mandatory labeling of GE foods. In response, the organic stakeholder organization Organic Voices

initiated the "Just Label It: We Have the Right to Know Campaign" to encourage an avalanche of comments for consideration by the FDA. The goal is over one million petition signers/commenters – that should get the FDA's attention!

Both UUMFE and the UUA have joined hundreds (almost 600 at press time) of organizations as Just Label It partners in support of the FDA petition. To date, over 500,000 individuals have responded. UUMFE encourages all UUs to support this petition and our *right to know* what is in our food, whatever your position on GE foods may be.

For a quick overview of the issues, see the UUMFE website home page news section. In-depth informa-



tion, resources, and an opportunity to sign and comment on the petition may be found on the Just Label It website: <http://justlabelit.org>. ♦

Our Place In the Web of Life

Join in the 'transformative learning' experience of the new Environmental Justice curriculum from UU Ministry for Earth – *Our Place In the Web of Life*. The highly participatory sessions can bring together people across age and racial affiliations and action initiatives to build a web of mutually informed projects and create a plan of action for future work.

To begin your exploration of how this new curriculum will help you create a community that learns and acts based on UU values, visit www.uuministryforearth.org/EJ-Curriculum to view videos and download materials.

On Feb. 6 at 7 p.m. EST, Dr. Mark A. Hicks, one of the curriculum designers, will present a **Coaching Webinar** for congregational facilitators of the new curriculum. Dr. Hicks will also answer any questions that you may have from your review of the curriculum session guides, reading materials, and suggested activities. The number of participants in the Webinar is limited – register soon at www.uuministryforearth.org/Coaching_Registration.



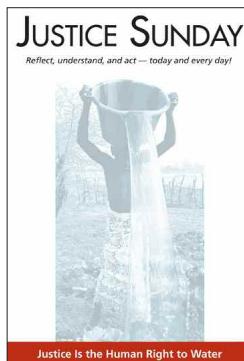
The 'sculpture' pictured here is a product of the UU Church of Rockville (MD) after the first Session of the curriculum, led by Terri Barr and Mary Lanigan. The group used a variety of available materials to express their place in the 'web of life.'

News From UU Ministry For Earth

Water Justice Is Focus of Justice Sunday 2012

Cindy Davidson, UUMFE Board Member

Each spring since 2004, the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) has invited congregations to stand together on a specific human rights issue within one of its four focus areas – civil liberties, economic justice, environmental justice, and rights in humanitarian crises. It develops comprehensive resources and encourages congregations to engage with the annual theme over an extended period, to allow time for meaningful reflection, understanding, and action.



This year's Justice Sunday theme is *Justice Is the Human Right to Water*. As part of its Environmental Justice Program, UUSC promotes and defends the human right to water, both in the United States and around the world, thus upholding the inherent worth and dignity of every person. All people have a right to safe, sufficient, affordable, accessible water for daily human needs.

For its Earth Day packet last year, UU Ministry for Earth also focused on water justice – *Earth Day 2011: Sacred Waters*. As you plan your Justice Sunday activities, be sure to check out all the water justice resources and suggested actions on the UUMFE website – begin with the main page at <http://uuministryforearth.org/2011-ED-MainPage>. Our materials complement those on the UUSC website – start there at <http://www.uusc.org/justicesunday/2012>.

March 25, 2012, the Sunday closest to World Water Day, is the suggested date for Justice Sunday, but UUSC encourages congregations to plan the program dates that work best for their calendars. If you have questions about planning your program, contact UUSC at volunteerservices@uusc.org. If UUMFE can help in any way, e-mail office@uuministryforearth.org. ♦

Grants Will Help Support UUMFE's Environmental Justice Work

Nancy King Smith, UUMFE Board Co-Chair

UMFE has received a generous \$20,000 grant from the Cedar Tree Foundation. The funds will support both operating and environmental justice activities over the next year. Some will be used to evaluate the new EJ curriculum, including assessing what additional modules should be. Some will be used for leadership development, with a particular focus on young adults.

The Fund for Unitarian Universalism of the UU Funding Program has granted \$4780 for an "Ethics and Theology Initiative" being planned with Meadville-Lombard and Starr-King Seminaries that will bring UU ethicists and theologians together to explore how we can better articulate a UU framework for environmental justice work. Pam Sparr and Mark Hicks, developers of the EJ curriculum, are organizing the effort. ♦

Share Our Passion – Volunteer With UU Ministry for Earth

Karen Urbano, UUMFE Board Member

Were you the Green Sanctuary chair at your congregation? Is your congregation certified? Are you ready now to move into your district and beyond in your passion for the environment? If so, UU Ministry for Earth needs YOU! We can offer you several areas of involvement to keep your juices flowing in your quest for environmental justice.

From serving as a district liaison, to fundraising, to membership recruiting, to providing content for our website, newsletters and Facebook page – there are many ways we could use your help. Sermons? Homilies? Workshop ideas? Bring them on!

Are you a techno-geek and UU environmentalist? We can also use your help with website issues as well as in managing social media.

Please get in touch with us at office@uuministryforearth.org or call (503) 595-9392. Operators are standing by to hear how you might volunteer. Further details are readily available. ♦

News From UU Ministry For Earth

NWEI Provides Valuable Resources

Ellen McClaran, UUMFE Board Member



Northwest Earth Institute

Inspiring people to take responsibility for Earth

UU Ministry for Earth (UUMFE) and the Northwest Earth Institute (NWEI) have enjoyed a fruitful partnership for years. UU congregations have purchased hundreds of NWEI discussion courses and find them extremely useful during the Green Sanctuary process and beyond. For each purchase, NWEI then shares a portion of its profit with UUMFE, which helps us develop our own resources. A win-win for all!

This blurb from the website hints at why environmentally-focused UUs love NWEI materials so much:

Since 1993, NWEI has been leading the curious and the motivated to take responsibility for Earth. Our proven process of connection, reflection, and action changes you for good. Through discussion courses and the annual EcoChallenge, we help you engage your community in meaningful conversations that lead to "Aha!" moments about the way you live, work, create, and consume. The result is a life that is simpler, richer, and better – for you and for Earth.

Recently, NWEI has displayed an uncanny knack of thinking like a UU. It published *Global Warming: Changing CO2urse* around the same time the Climate Change Statement of Conscience (SOC – 2006) was being implemented. *Menu for the Future* was ready for the CSAI phase of Ethical Eating and *Hungry for Change* was published last fall right after the Ethical Eating CSAI became a SOC at GA 2011.

In the newer course offerings and in older titles updated in the past couple of years, NWEI has improved the format through including many more ideas for follow-up actions as well as resources beyond print materials, including podcasts and TED talk videos. Go to www.nwei.org to read about all eleven course offerings, watch a video to learn about the facilitation process, and to order the guides.

Note: When you order, be sure to select UUMFE/Green Sanctuary as your "connection" so NWEI will share some of the profit with us. ♦

UUMFE Embraces EcoChallenge

Cindy Davidson, UUMFE Board Member

In addition to publishing discussion courses and supporting participants, Northwest Earth Institute also offers an annual EcoChallenge. From NWEI:

The EcoChallenge is an opportunity to change your life for good. Every October, we challenge you to choose one action to reduce your environmental impact and stick with it for two weeks. As an individual or with a team, you pick a category – water, trash, energy, food or transportation – and set a goal that stretches your comfort zone and makes a difference for you and the planet.

Last fall, UUMFE board members and our office admin took up the challenge and pledged actions in each category except water. We enjoyed it so much that we plan to do it again next year! You are invited to join us – watch for details in the UUMFE fall newsletter in Sept. Here's what our team pledged.

Trash Reduction

- Compost more.
- Refrain from buying any new commercial goods and donate unused/unwanted items.

Energy Efficiency

- Get a carpool to church.
- Turn all paper waste into energy efficient building material.

Sustainable Food Options

- Limit my meat eating to twice a week.
- Continue eating vegan, after 30-day cleanse.
- Grow a larger amount of food, share it with others, and not waste any of the food.
- Eat food from my garden and the community garden across the street.
- Serve two meals to friends using only local ingredients from my farmers' market.
- Grow much of our food and try to rely on that to feed us.
- Further reduce my "food miles" and focus on local seasonal choices.

Alternative Transportation

- Bike or walk to errands within one mile; contribute to carbon offsets for miles traveled by car or air.
- Drive less and walk/bike more.
- Bike when I can; take the bus instead of the Prius; just stay at home! ♦

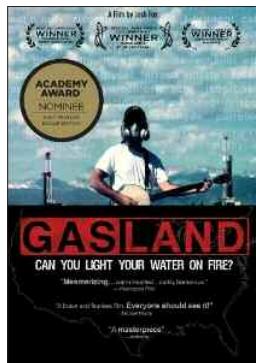
News From Members and Congregations

UUs in New York, Ohio, and Pennsylvania Tackle Hydrofracking

Nancy King Smith, UUMFE Board Co-Chair

Us are taking a lead in calling for accountability over the environmental problems caused by horizontal hydrofracturing for natural gas, commonly known as "fracking." As gas companies in New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio scramble to entice people to sign leases for drilling in the Marcellus and Utica shales deep underneath the land, grave concerns are being raised about the

potential risks to ground water, air pollution, land disturbance, and now, increased risk of earthquakes.



A number of UU congregations have become involved in exposing the risks and calling on state and local legislators to put a moratorium on the rush to drill until the risks are understood or to ban the

process altogether. Viewing the movie *Gasland* has been a wake-up call to many. UUMFE is interested in learning about congregational, District, and interfaith efforts – please send any stories to

office@uuministryforearth.org.

Here are some of those who already doing great work.

In New York: **Geri Aird**, Co-Chair of the Green Sanctuary Committee at May Memorial UU Society, Syracuse, NY and co-coordinator of the Environmental Health and Justice Action Team for the Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter's Gas Drilling Task Force.

In Ohio: **Ron Prosek**, member of East Shore UU Church in Kirtland, Ohio, and primary instigator behind the establishment of FACT (Faith Communities Together – for Fracking Awareness) that is focusing on awareness within faith communities, especially targeted to churches that are being asked to sign leases on their properties. **Ted Voneida**, member of Kent UU Church, who has testified on fracking in Columbus and is part of an effort that has gotten Kent, England, to partner with Kent, Ohio, as sister cities concerned with fracking. **Susie Beisendorfer**, member of the Youngstown UU Church, who spearheaded a day of protest in Youngstown

during the Ohio Gas Industry's Expo, which pulled together over 200 people and many organizations with the UU church as the headquarters.

In Pennsylvania: **Rev. Nate Walker**, who has spearheaded the UU Pennsylvania State Advocacy Network's (UUPLAN) efforts to raise awareness and to get Pennsylvania to instigate an impact fee. Good, concise information about hydrofracking is available on the UUPLAN website – <http://www.uuplan.org/page/marcellus-shale-2>.

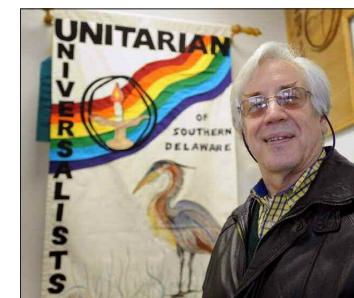
In West Virginia and Ohio: the Ohio Valley UU Church, under the leadership of **Pat Jacobson** and **Deborah "Kibbie" Kibbel**, has taken a lead in organizing anti-fracking information along the Ohio River in both states. ♦

UU Organizes New Delaware Chapter of Interfaith Power & Light

Adapted from an article by Gary Soulsman of *The News Journal* for *DelawareOnline.com*, Dec. 31, 2011

John Sykes, a member of the UUs of Southern Delaware in Lewes, is the driving force behind the launch of Delaware Interfaith Power & Light, the 39th affiliate of the national non-profit, which promotes conservation, energy efficiency and renewal sources among religious groups to combat climate change. Sykes sees a moral imperative to use renewable energy in place of fuels that add carbon to the atmosphere and contribute to climate change – "If we have any responsibility towards this marvelous creation, it transcends politics and should remind us that we are our brothers' keepers."

The group's first event was a workshop in late January to give local worship communities an opportunity to learn about conservation. The director of the Interfaith Coalition on Energy, which is based in Philadelphia and consults with congregations in the region, led the workshop. "If we can get a lot of people to work on conservation, we can make a big dent in Delaware energy consumption



John Sykes. Photo: *The News Journal/Gary Emeigh*

News From Members and Congregations

and maybe inspire some folks to do even more," said Sykes.

Chad Tolman, a member of the First Unitarian Church of Wilmington, adds, "Living ethically means being concerned about the poor and needy who are especially at risk from sea level rise that we expect to come with global warming." Many UUs follow his monthly blog, *Climate Change News* (<http://tolmancnews.blogspot.com>). Chad also helped write the 2006 Statement of Conscience on the Threat of Global Warming/Climate Change.♦

UU Church in Eugene Is Prize Winning Recycler

Adapted from an article by Mat Wolf for The Register-Guard, Nov. 12, 2011

The UU Church in Eugene, OR, was among nine organizations to receive "Trashbuster Awards" from the Lane County Resource Recovery Advisory Committee during the week leading up to the annual National America Recycles Day last fall. The awards are presented to those who seek to reduce waste of resources while contributing to the county's economy and environmental ethic. The church won because of its efforts to repurpose and

reuse old lumber in new renovation projects.

The church has been renovating the site of its future home, a former Scottish Rite building, for more than a year, and in doing so has employed an army of 280 volunteers who have sought ways to recycle a range of materials in the 18,000-square-foot building.

Member Edwin Zack said the church has reused or recycled nearly 85 percent of all the materials in the building. "If there's a will to work, you can discover all kinds of wonderful ways to reuse materials that would have gone in the Dumpster," Zack said, "(The goal) is to be 'green' while walking as lightly on this planet as possible."

During the renovation, Members pulled 250 pounds of nails from lumber; truckloads of fir paneling, fire suppression piping and more than 40 doors were cleaned and prepped; several thousand acoustic tiles were reclaimed; stage equipment and fixtures were given to a community theater; electrical wiring was stripped and either sold or used for scrap, along with approximately 10 tons of ducting and other metals.

Because of volunteer labor on the project, the church was able to reduce its estimated renovation costs from \$2.3 million to \$1.7 million, Zack said. The projected completion date is April 15, 2012.♦



Save the Date for Justice GA

General Assembly 2012 will be a gathering with multiple ways of engaging in justice work for people of all ages. Joining with the people of Arizona, we will worship, witness,

learn and work together. We will leave General Assembly grounded in our faith, energized for justice, and with resources to bring this work home to our congregations. UU Ministry for Earth will be there – join us!



This composite image – nicknamed "Blue Marble 2012" – uses a number of swaths of the Earth's surface taken on January 4, 2012 from the VIIRS instrument aboard NASA's most recently launched Earth-observing satellite - Suomi NPP. (NASA/NOAA/GSFC/Suomi NPP/VIIRS/Norman Kuring/Courtesy)



1034 SW 13th Ave.

Portland, OR 97205

office@uuministryforearth.org

503-595-9392

www.uuministryforearth.org

Return Service Requested

Honor Congregations – Thanks!

By Irene Keim, UUMFE Board Co-Chair

UU Ministry for Earth gratefully acknowledges our Honor Congregations. These congregations have given generously to support the work of UUs caring for Earth through budgeted gifts, split-the-plate offerings, and donations beyond the requested congregational level of \$100. The following congregations gave these special donations between June 2010 and Dec. 2011. Thank you!



Honor Congregations:

All Souls Church Unitarian, Washington, DC
Champlain Valley UU Society, Middlebury, VT
Channing Memorial Church, Ellicott City, MD
Community Church of New York, NY
Emerson Unitarian Church, Houston, TX
First Unitarian Church of Cleveland, Shaker Heights, OH
First Unitarian Church of Orlando, FL
First Unitarian Society of Plainfield, NY
First Unitarian Society of Wilmington, DE
Lake Country UU Church, Hartland, WI

Live Oak UU Fellowship, Oakland, CA
Mt. Diablo UU Church, Walnut Creek, CA
Mt. Vernon UU Church, Alexandria, VA
North UU Congregation, Lewis Center, OH
Northwoods UU Church, The Woodlands, TX
Olympia Brown UU Church, Racine, WI
Starr King UU Church, Hayward, CA
UU Church in Reston, VA
UU Church of Davis, CA
UU Church of Palo Alto, CA
UU Community Church of Washington County, Hillsboro, OR
UU Congregation of Fairfax, Oakton, VA
UU Congregation of Frederick, MD
UU Congregation of Miami, FL
UU Congregation of Milford, NH
UU Congregation of Monmouth County, Lincroft, NJ
UU Fellowship at Stony Brook, NY
UU Fellowship of Athens, OH ♦

Your donations make possible the work towards Earth ministry as an integral part of our UU experience. Go to www.uuministryforearth.org for donation options, as well as many UUMFE resources.

Thank you for your support.