



Unanimous Vote! UUMFE Retains Affiliate Status

On January 20, 2008 the UUA Board of Trustees voted unanimously to continue the affiliation between UUMFE and the UUA. UU Ministry for Earth is now one of only five organizations formally affiliated with the UUA. This distinction honors the widespread and deeply committed work of every one of you who stepped up to leadership in your congregations and districts, because one of the main criteria for the status was the level of congregational work done by the organization.

Our status had been pending since last year when the UUA Board of Trustees adopted more stringent requirements for organizations wishing to renew or obtain independent affiliate status. As of October all but four of 46 former affiliates has been denied affiliate status, with UUMFE and the UU Partner Church Council pending.

During this hiatus the UUMFE Board worked hard to demonstrate to the UUA that our programs and services meet congregational needs, that our mission is clearly related to the Purposes of the UUA, and that, as our capacity allows, we work with other UU groups. In addition, the UUMFE Board welcomed the review as an

opportunity to clarify our vision and purpose. We conducted an intense written discernment process and held two day-long facilitated workshops with a development consultant. We gained in insight and, as a result, are actively creating new tools to help us grow and lead in service to UUs.

Being an independent affiliate includes having certain benefits: a General Assembly workshop each year, a description in the annual UUA Directory and on UUA.org., reduced rates for advertising in *UU World*, and a lower rate for booth space in the GA exhibit hall. These benefits are appreciated, but the true cause for celebrating the UUA decision is that it sends a clear signal that care and celebration of the Earth are moving into the mainstream of Unitarian Universalism.

This decision also recognizes that the work our members are doing in congregations is valuable and important. The distinction of being an affiliate organization honors the widespread and deeply committed work of grassroots UUs who have stepped up to leadership for Earth ministry in their congregations and districts. ♦

Make Earth Day A Day to Honor and Celebrate



Honor Congregational Leader Nominate UUMFE ECO-HERO

Is there an UUnsung Eco-Hero in your congregation? Often grassroots environmental activists go unrecognized, yet their efforts to protect the Earth are increasingly critical to the well-being of the planet we all share. For Earth Day 2008, UUMFE invites you to identify and celebrate someone in your congregation who has made a significant effort that you would identify as Earth ministry. Your UU could become the first annual *UU Ministry for Earth Eco-Hero* honoree and be recognized at General Assembly this June.

To participate:

1. Identify an individual within your congregation who has done outstanding, dedicated work to build a just and sustainable Earth. Arrange with your congregation and Board to recognize this individual as part of an Earth Day

Celebration or other service this spring.

2. Present your hero with a beautiful certificate of recognition from UUMFE honoring his or her Earth ministry.
3. Nominate your honoree for the UU Ministry for Earth Eco-Hero award to be announced at General Assembly 2008 by submitting your nomination no later

(Continued on Page 3)

Inside

- 2 Message from the Chair
- 4 Taking Green Sanctuary Beyond Our Congregations
- 5 Our Seven UU Principles
- 6 In Need of a Good Word
- 7 Restoring the Web of Creation
Direct Your UUA "Now is the Time" Gift
- 8 New! *We Are All Connected* RE Lessons



Unitarian Universalist
Ministry for Earth

Unitarian Universalist
Ministry for Earth
NEWSLETTER
is published three times per
year by
UU Ministry for Earth
PO Box 11
Lyme, NH 03768.

The points of view expressed by contributors are their own and not necessarily those of UU Ministry for Earth.

Subscriptions are available through membership in the organization.

The printed version of this NEWSLETTER uses 100% post-consumer content recycled paper.

ABOUT UUMFE

Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth is a nonprofit organization whose membership envisions a world in which all people make reverence, gratitude, and care for the living Earth central to their lives.

Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth is a 501 c (3) organization. Contributions are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.

UUMFE BOARD

Chair

Barbara Ford

Treasurer

Terry Wiggins

Directors

Wendy Irvine

Robert Keim

Claudia Kern

Steve Maier

Ann May

Nancy King Smith

Karen Urbano

Director of

Environmental Ministry

Rev. Katherine Jesch

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

UU Earth Ministry **The Present and The Future**

"As for the future, your task is not to foresee it, but to enable it."
- Antoine de Saint-Exupery

Much has been happening within our Earth Ministry movement, both in our grassroots congregations and within the national UU world. Here is a brief "State of the Movement":

The Green Sanctuary Program continues to grow exponentially. Applications for candidacy have already doubled over last year! 596 Green Sanctuary manuals sold in the last year and a half. 145 congregations officially enrolled as candidates or certified Green Sanctuaries! New Green Sanctuary manual receiving rave reviews.

Our Affiliate Status: On January 20th, the UUA Board, by a unanimous vote, decided that UU Ministry for Earth would be one of five organizations to retain its affiliate status.

Our Resources for Congregations: Our CD and print resources continue in popularity, and in this newsletter we announce a new RE Resource, see page _____. Our listservs hosts 612 members. Volunteer Regional Coordinators and staff continue to provide great service.

Our "Growing Edge": Environmental Justice Work. The UUMFE board has made the issue of environmental justice a new priority for the organization. We are ambitiously planning a national UU environmental justice conference for early 2009.

Our Organizational Infrastructure: Operations are being consolidated into our new national office in Portland, Oregon, and, finally, Rev. Jesch is receiving a fair salary for her work. We are upgrading our database and communication systems.

Our Deepening Relationship with the UUA: We continue to make real progress in our work with UUA leadership to integrate environmental work more deeply into the faith. Watch for some exciting announcements about those efforts in the near future.

Here's the catch.

While the work of UU Ministry for Earth grows exponentially, our income is not keeping pace.

We need to let you know that this national effort is presently understaffed, and, without support from member congregations and individuals, we cannot keep up with the demand of the work. UUMFE is the sole organization working to meet the Earth ministry and advocacy needs of UUs across the country. We are funded entirely by memberships, donations, and resource sales.

This year, in part because of our outdated technical database and website tools, we did not send out an annual renewal notice. As a consequence, a significant percentage of last year's members have not yet renewed for 2007-2008, many Green Sanctuary congregations have not kept up with congregational membership dues, and donations are down. We are addressing the technical problems, and an updated membership management system and new website tools will be launched in the next few months. But to implement these improvements and to maintain our upward trajectory we need your support now.

(Continued on Page 3)

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

UU Earth Ministry: The Present and the Future - continued

- Renew your membership for the current July 2007-June 2008 year at a generous level.
- Consider an additional personal gift, if you are a current member.
- Contribute to the UUA *Now is the Time* funding campaign and request that your contribution be designated to directly fund either UU Ministry for Earth or the UUMFE Environmental Justice Conference. (See Page 7)
- Watch your mail for a special mailing on a UUMFE Capital Campaign for organizational development and for the Environmental Justice Conference and respond generously when it arrives. (Please contact our office if you would like to assist us with either of these efforts.)
- Grow membership in your congregation as part of your Earth Day celebration.
- Ask your congregation to host a shared plate or special offering with UU Ministry for Earth as the beneficiary.

Please review and discuss these options in your community. The excitement and energy for Earth ministry is skyrocketing! With your help, we can enable a sustainable and just future for our children and our world.

In Faith, *Barbara Ford*



Earth Day - Four Ways to Honor and Celebrate - continued

than May 1. It will be necessary to conduct an interview with your nominee to complete the nomination form.

GAIA

UUMFE MEMBERSHIP CHALLENGE Win a FREE Workshop

UUMFE encourages all congregations to host an information table and membership drive in conjunction with their Earth Day service. While some churches hold congregational memberships in UUMFE, it is vital for our growth that we continue to build individual and household memberships as well.

As an incentive, we are offering a free workshop to the congregation that signs up the largest percentage of new UUMFE individual and household members relative to their total congregational membership before June 1. Barbara Ford of GAIA Workshops will facilitate this day-long workshop for 15-30 people. Content is based upon *The Work That Reconnects*, a revolutionary workshop process developed by eco-philosopher Joanna Macy. This is a great opportunity for your congregation to gain hope, clarity, and a new perspective on our role in the healing of our world.



SPECIAL EARTH DAY OFFERING Fund UUMFE Congregational Membership

When congregations apply for Green Sanctuary candidacy and accreditation there is an expectation that they will maintain an annual congregational UUMFE membership of \$100 or more. In addition, many congregations are not able to participate in the Green Sanctuary program, but they wish to show congregational support for Earth Ministry by becoming congregational members.

Special collections are an important source of reve-

nue for UUMFE, and we would like to encourage every congregation to make this an annual tradition; so if your governing body approves, you might consider a shared plate or special offering as a way of funding your annual UUMFE congregational membership as well as a means of making a substantial donation to UUMFE. We will designate the first \$100 of your gift as a congregational membership, if you include a membership form with your gift.

EARTH DAY CELEBRATION



Download UUMFE Earth Day Packet

A special packet of materials to supplement or help shape your Earth Day service will be available to download on or before March 1st at www.uuministryforearth.org. The packet will contain all you will need for the above activities, including:

- An Earth Day homily
- Specially designed certificate recognizing your congregational Eco-Hero
- Nomination form for national UUMFE Eco-Hero Award
- A set of three beautiful posters featuring a meditation on Earth, a description of UUMFE, and a promotion for gift memberships. Posters are medium-resolution files designed to fit on letter-sized paper, but can also be printed with good results on larger stock, like 11X17.
- UUMFE brochure and membership form to reproduce as needed
- Membership challenge directions and submission form, plus information on "The Work that Reconnects" workshop prize. ♦



GREEN SANCTUARY

Taking Green Sanctuary Beyond Our Congregations

By Rev. Katherine Jesch,
Director of Environmental Ministry and
Green Sanctuary Program Coordinator

The Green Sanctuary Program was conceived as a way for congregations to put their environmental values into action at a very local level. **Sixty-three congregations are now accredited as Green Sanctuaries, and another 82 are formally enrolled as candidates.** With such success, we are often asked whether the program is limited exclusively to Unitarian Universalist congregations.

Since the beginning, the program has appealed to groups within the larger faith community. The UUMFE board has agreed, in theory, that we would be willing to offer accreditation to congregations of any faith. A few Christian churches, often with connections to UU congregations, have inquired about Green Sanctuary accreditation, even as our Green Sanctuary program has inspired two similar and more-recent Christian-based programs. *Green Congregations* is sponsored by Earth Ministries in Seattle and *Sustainable Sanctuaries* is sponsored by Green

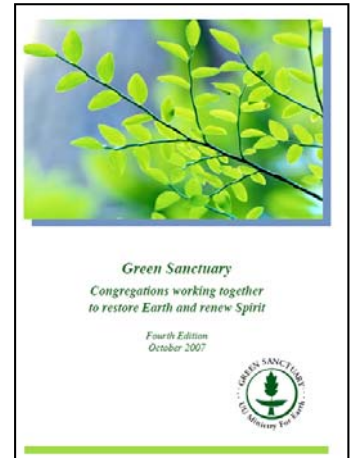
Our Green Sanctuary program has inspired two similar and more-recent Christian-based programs.

Faith in New Jersey.

The Green Sanctuary framework also has the potential to be applied beyond the congregational level, so UUMFE has been considering what requirements would be appropriate for Districts and other UU organizations. Several UU Camps and Conference Centers have explored Green Sanctuary, and at least one is seriously working on an assessment and action plan. Addressing sustainable management practices such as energy conservation, waste management, and avoidance of toxic materials would be similar to a congregation's action plan. However, with their seasonal nature and revolving, short-term communities, the programmatic aspects of the program would likely be quite different for camps and conferences.

At least a couple of Districts are also exploring what it would take to become a Green Sanctuary. Especially in those Districts with a cluster of active Green

Newest edition of the Green Sanctuary Manual, now available in both printed form and on a cd from the UUMFE website.



Sanctuary congregations, collaborative volunteer energy and commitment could make this possible.

The UUA conducted an environment audit of the properties at Beacon Street a couple of years ago, but for an old facility with historic values, the quest to simply become energy efficient is daunting. Greening other aspects of the institution will require a sustained commitment of both funds and staff time.

The UU Service Committee (UUSC) has taken the challenge to address environmental justice seriously. They are considering such commitments as automatic carbon offset for all necessary air travel by the staff, and they are looking at alternatives such as teleconferencing for meetings when face-to-face is not so crucial. UUSC moved into new offices last August, and the renovations that took place before the move made the building as energy efficient as possible.

Their "green team" has assessed activities, programs, and management practices according to the four focus areas and they have drafted a proposed action plan that will be submitted to the executive team for approval by the end of this month. Environmental Justice Program Manager, Patricia Jones, reports that they are about 75% finished with their Green Sanctuary candidate application. UUSC may be setting the pace for other UU institutions, but chances are they won't be unique for very long.

UUs everywhere are convinced that now is the time to put our values into action in every way possible, and they are pushing us to take it to the next level!

With hope for the future,

Katherine



Our Seven UU Principles

By Rev. Katherine Jesch

The seven principles, especially the seventh, are central to the mission and purpose of Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth. They guide our program design and speak to our moral obligation to care for Earth. The seventh principle gives us an overarching framework for getting to work in this hurting world, mindful of our inherent relationship with it. Our principles, collectively, offer us a richer and more complex understanding of how we must live and respond on a planet at risk. How might our principles appear through the broad lens of the seventh? Let's take a look:

The inherent worth and dignity of every person: not just every person, but every being and the living system as a whole : not just humans, but animals, land, oceans, forests, microbes, and more(1st principle)

Justice, equity and compassion in human relations: compassion for those who are powerless to protect themselves from environmental degradation they have not caused; compassion for ourselves and one another when we feel uncertain and confused about the appropriate responses to many crises; compassion for feelings of inadequacy and helplessness that come from wanting to work towards a better world and often finding that as individuals we don't have power enough. (2nd principle)

Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth:

a deepening of our relationships with each other, our fellow creatures, and with the Earth itself through worship, prayer and meditation, and other communal practices as we discover sources of support for our individual spiritual lives. Through our spiritual practice we take sustenance from our relationship with nature to stay strong to carry on the work. (3rd principle)

The free and responsible search for truth and meaning:

seeking to understand what science tells us and how that reshapes our world view within the context of

the world's diverse religious and philosophical traditions; seeking to live congruent and ethical lives, responsibly and in harmony with our relationship with Earth and all living beings. (4th principle)

World community, and democratic process:

Our actions have impacts around the globe. Collaboration and cooperation among all nations of the Earth are required to minimize the consequences of those actions on those who did not take them and who will not benefit. All must have a voice, regardless of their power or wealth. All have equal rights to the responsible use of the Earth's resources and inalienable rights to the clean air, water, and soil that sustain life on Earth. (5th & 6th principles)

Respect for the interdependent web of all existence, of which we are a part:

the foundation for recognizing our spiritual connection with nature, understanding how that relationship nurtures and sustains us in our daily lives, and being accountable for how we live. (7th principle)

This essay was adapted from the UU Ministry for Earth response to the Commission on Appraisal's (COA's) survey of the UUA Principles, Purposes and Sources. UUMFE encourages active participation in this important multi-year review process.

To learn more visit the COA website:

<http://www25.uua.org/coa/> ♦



The Seventh Principle

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

Respect for the Interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.



In Need of A Good Word

*Guest commentary
from the Editors of Orion Magazine*

Environment, ecology, sustainability, conservation, green.

For decades these words and a handful of others have anchored the movement for a more sensible treatment of land, water, air, and nonhuman life. It's hard to picture where the effort to protect nature would be without these words.

They are often used interchangeably, one word being picked over another for some reason—or for no reason at all. *Environment* is the most general but also the most politically charged. We say *ecology* when we're trying to sound like we know something about science. *Sustainability* is a vague term that describes a way of living that we think we need to work toward. *Conservation* generally signals the protection of land. And there's *green*, which, more often than not, refers to something you can buy.

environment ecology
sustainability
conservation green

And so on closer examination, the terms are not as interchangeable as one might have thought. Is an ecologist part of the sustainability movement? Is someone who goes out of their way to buy green products an environmentalist? Are the environmental and sustainability movements even pursuing the same goals?

Who cares, you may say. We don't have time to fuss around with nuances of language while the world goes up in flames. And after all, none of the words are bad for the Earth—act as a gateway, an entry point to a world where the well-being of nature, or the well-being of one's grandchildren, is more important than the economic bottom line and being comfortable.

The reason to care is that we need terminology that invites everyone into the effort to transform the way we live on the planet—people of all economic means, all political persuasions, all ethnicities, and all nationalities. Speaking at the October 2007 Bioneers conference, activ-

ist and *Orion* advisor Van Jones presented the crowd with a moral challenge. "As this movement moves from the margin to the center of politics, from the margin to the center of culture, from the margin to the center of the economy—who are we going to take with us, and who are we going to leave behind?"

Does the environmental movement's terminology take everyone with us? If sustainability means buying a \$26,000 hybrid car, or shopping at Whole Foods (that's a whole paycheck for anyone outside of Marin County," said Jones), then sustainability is not taking everyone with us. If environment means saving land and natural resources first and figuring out how people are going to make a living later, then that's not our word either.

It is significant that Jones described his challenge not as a strategic one, but a moral one, because, more and more, morality is what the work of saving the planet is all about. For many of us, human morality and the survival of the planet are now one and the same. The only way to transcend the morass is through love of nature, love of our neighbors, love of family, and the recognition that the needs of all are one and the same. The fact is, we are only going to get serious about the challenges that lie ahead when each of us arrives at a deep understanding that to do anything else is downright wrong. And everyone needs to be invited to participate in that process.

Whatever word we finally arrive at that sums up a new model for how we live on the planet, it has to reflect a grounding in peace, justice, health, and spirituality as well as in science, policy, and economics. Whatever this movement is, whatever you call it, however you describe it, however you try to bring more people into the fold, it will only succeed if people know and believe in their hearts and souls that it is not just the right way forward, it is in fact the *only* way forward. We are in need of a good word. Got any ideas? ♦

Editor's note:

This editorial appeared in the January/February 2008 issue of *Orion Magazine*. To learn more or subscribe to this inspiring journal, visit www.orionmagazine.org.

UUMFE, too, is looking for new words.

Please mail your suggestions to
office@uuministryforearth.org.

Restoring the Web of Creation: Justice and Joy for All **Leadership Development for Unitarian Universalists**

To mobilize UUs to address environmental justice issues more effectively in their congregations and communities and to continue to spur denominational change from the "bottom up", UUMFE plans an extraordinary, first-of-its-kind, national UU environmental justice conference and training. This event, planned for late 2008 or early 2009, will speak to and engage the whole person -- physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually.

Under the leadership of UUMFE Program Director Rev. Katherine Jesch and Conference Planning Coordinator Pamela Sparr, a diverse leadership team has been selected consisting of leaders from UUSC, UUFETA, and Legislative Ministries, congregational leaders, youth, young adults, and people of color. Additionally, we are collaborating with UU staff from Identity-Based Ministries, the Washington Office of Advocacy, the Youth and Young Adult Program, and the Congregational Services Program.

The broad vision of the conference is to deepen and broaden the national momentum that exists among individual UUs and UU congregations to embrace the Seventh Principle. In particular, the focus of this event is to galvanize and equip UUs to more effectively address environmental justice issues in their congregations and communities and to continue to spur change from the "bottom up" within our denomination.

Specific objectives of the conference planning include:

1. Promoting a deeper awareness/understanding of the concept of "environmental justice" among UUs.
2. Providing an opportunity for significant theological reflection, so that grassroots UU leaders can discern and/or more easily articulate their faith-based values and vision of "environmental justice", as well as the spiritual/theological/religious basis of their position.
3. Strengthening the existing national network of UUs interested in promoting more active work on environmental justice at various levels (e.g., congregational, community, state, and district).
4. Enhancing grassroots/regional UU leaders' skills to promote environmental justice.
5. Supporting grassroots leaders by providing the latest information and educational materials on key environmental justice issues, including those relevant campaigns and programs that are national priorities for the UUA, UUMFE, and UUSC.

Stay tuned and watch your mail for a special opportunity to help make this conference a reality.♦



Direct Your UUA "Now is the Time!" Gift to UUMFE

The current UUA funding campaign, *Now is the Time!*, is a response to thousands of UUs who said to the UUA, "Help us grow!" Over five years, the comprehensive fundraising campaign hopes to generate \$20 million in immediate resources and \$30 million in legacy covenants. It will help Unitarian Universalism to grow in many dimensions: diversity, leadership, numbers, spirit, and witness, each supporting the other.

***Now Is the Time!* is "a comprehensive fundraising campaign that boldly asks UUs what they need to thrive, what they want to support, and how projects and programs should be shaped."**

You can respond to these questions and voice your commitment to the UUMFE vision of making the care and celebration of Earth central to our faith by requesting that your contributions to the *Now is the Time* campaign be directed either to UU Ministry for Earth for ongoing program and capacity-building or to the UU Ministry for Earth Environmental Justice Conference Fund. If you wish to designate your gift to UUMFE, please contact Emily Sullins, UUA Gift Officer, (617) 948-6510, or esullins@uua.org. Donating in this manner supports both the UUA in meeting their goals for funding justice initiatives and UUMFE in growing our organizational capacity and in shaping a new leading edge in environmental justice work.

We encourage you to give to the *Now is the Time* campaign, to take advantage of this opportunity if you have not already contributed, and to tell others about this unique opportunity to support the UUA funding campaign **and** UU Ministry for Earth.

(Please note that previously made contributions or contributions from Association Sunday cannot be designated in this manner.)♦



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
MINISTRY FOR EARTH
PO BOX 11
LYME, NH 03768

office@uuministryforearth.org
503-595-9392



We Are All Connected, 7th Principle *Butterfly and Creepy Crawlies RE Lessons*

*"It is important for us to care for this Good Earth by living the 7 Principles.
We can start by learning more about its "Children"
no matter if they are as small as a butterfly or as great as a whale."*

So begins *"We are All Connected, 7th Principle Butterfly and Creepy Crawlies RE Lessons"* for children of all ages. This wonderful series of 10 lessons is the newest resource to be offered by UU Ministry for Earth on either CD for \$20 or in a paper for \$25. Each lesson has step-by-step instructions on how to conduct the lesson with chalice lighting, opening words, closing thoughts and resources to develop each lesson further. The lessons engage children with stories, fun crafts, music or other hands-on activities. Illustrations in the booklet were designed so that children could be creative and color in their own creepy crawlies. Children will learn how to feed butterflies, where dragonfly babies live, how to race hermit crabs and more about other creepy crawlies, and grow in understanding of how important each creature is to the fragile web of life.

Butterfly and Creepy Crawlies is the generous gift of its creator, **Stefani Scott** of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Stony Brook. Stefani is a Worship Associate and was a co-chair of the 7th Principle/Green Sanctuary Projects for UUFSB. *A portion of the sale of this resource supports the Earth ministry work in Stefani's Fellowship which includes providing funds for children to attend Camp Sophie Fabs.*

Available March 1st. Order on the website: www.uuministryforearth.org

This Newsletter is a benefit of membership. If you have not already done so, please renew as soon as possible.